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PANDURANG HARI.

VOL. III.

PANDURANG BARI

VOL. II

PANDURANG HÀRÌ,

OR

MEMOIRS

OF

A HINDOO.

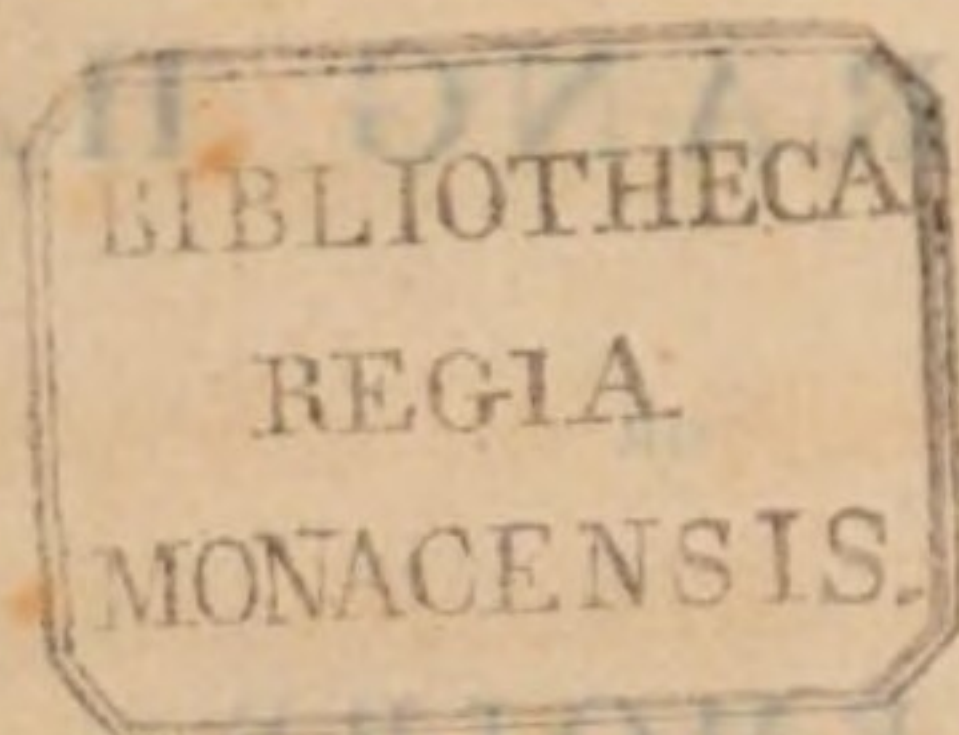
IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

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PANDURANG HÀRÌ.

CHAP. I.

I AROSE early on the following morning, and attended to make pùja to a deity hard by, where I found a number of persons assembled for the same purpose. Being a stranger, the eyes of all the inhabitants of the village present were directed towards me, and more, than one, of them was exceedingly anxious, that I should give some account of myself. I refrained, however, from satisfying their curiosity, and they suffered me to return to the durhm sallah unmolested. I there inquired the way to

Surat, and was little pleased to find that I could not travel thither in less than two days. Not intimidated by the intelligence, and firm to my object, I set out with a good resolution ; and had not gone far when I overtook several bullocks with their drivers, employed in the conveyance of grain, and found, like myself, they were bound to Surat. These drivers very readily gave me permission to accompany them ; and as we proceeded we grew more friendly, until one of them offered me a seat upon his beast, and thus saved me many a weary footstep. I reached Surat about the time I expected ; and, contrary to my former custom among bullock-drivers, met with no adventure on the road.

Surat was crowded with ships and vessels of all kinds. I found it a great place of

traffic, and frequented by most of the merchants of the East, as well as the West; rich, populous, and busy. I took the first opportunity of examining the city, as I had never before been within the walls. It bore the remains of its former grandeur, though the principal streets, or what had once been so, in the Moghul Serai, were narrow and exceedingly dirty. This was the first time I had ever been in a city the inhabitants of which were principally Musselmen. The filth of these people around their habitations struck me very forcibly, and made me thankful I was among the followers of Brahma.

After rambling in the Moghul Serai, I entered the common bazaar, which is on the outside of the old city wall. The misery, dirt, and stench I encountered there was

the most disgusting sight my eyes ever beheld. Kabob frying (which recalled Fuzl Khan's mother to my recollection) was carrying on in every corner. The numbers of old women roasting and frying, polluting the very atmosphere with their abominations, would almost exceed belief. The meat at the butchers'-stalls, the bread at the bakers', the very sweetmeats, were covered with impurities. The men were one half of them drunk, though, as Mahomedans, they were forbidden strong liquors—so much for their imperfect obedience to an imperfect religion! How far more exalted and sincere are the followers of Brahma! The women were bold, carried themselves coarsely, and seemed to be all slatterns. Quarrelling was heard from morning till night in every corner of the place, and the

followers of the Faithful in Surat appeared to me the vilest class of men I had ever sojourned amongst. The English, to whom it belonged, seemed either incapable of enforcing cleanliness by their authority, or had given the object up as a hopeless task. Leaving the bazaar, I saw not far off a large building, which they informed me was the jail, and that it was only just erected. The adawlut, or court-house, was close by, and again recalled Fuzl Khan, and his troubles there, to my recollection. The judge was considered, on the whole, to be a fair sample of the profession every where, having his prejudices and sympathies, as well as other men. Woe to those, however, who fell under his dislike, and still more under the hatred of a vagabond Parsee in authority beneath him, but a much greater man than

his master. By superlative cunning and hypocrisy, this Parsee had the good fortune to persuade men that he was as truly honourable and just as he appeared. He had filled several situations in all branches of the service—in the revenue, justice, customs, police, and commerce; with his long experience in so many departments, and without the inclination, who could be more honest? The English were either aware of this, or in ignorance of the character which really belonged to the fellow—the reader must decide which of the two was really the case. During my residence here, this obsequious and artful knave gave a grand *nautch*, or dance, to which the heads of the different departments were invited. The use of these invitations was, not to pay a compliment to the English, which they were silly enough

to imagine, but designed to add to his own importance by the presence of the strangers, which fully compensated for the expense incurred in their company, as they seldom remained more than half an hour. The influence acquired in consequence, was used in facilitating the extortion of money from the inhabitants, or in evading the payment of their just debts. In either case, who would dare grumble, when the judge himself was the intimate friend of the party against whom complaint was to be made ! The judge came to his dance, eat his sweetmeats and conserves, praised his children, and returned his embrace :—would any one be fool enough to complain against him ? Such was the result of the feeling in the place ; and, whether the reasoning was false or true, the poor people dared not run

the risk of making the attempt. Thus, as usual, the great ends of justice were defeated by the means taken to dispense it.

I remained no longer at Surat than was necessary for recovering myself after my journey: I left it, thoroughly disgusted with all I heard and saw there. I journeyed on until I reached Broach, the birth-place of Fuzl Khan. If I found Surat a filthy residence, how much more disgusting was this place! It seemed the concentration of all the dirt in the country, the centre of every beastly and disgusting habit. A native-born individual not only ruled or managed the people, but his superior also. It was painfully ludicrous to hear how the wise and proper regulations of the government were constantly evaded or set at nought, by the very person employed and paid to see

them enforced. The confidence reposed in vagabonds, with the high-sounding names of sudr aumeen, foujdar, sheristadar, vakeel, &c., exhibited a great degree of folly. Whoever has attained one of these titles, is very certain to make his fortune quickly; and I longed for one of the appointments, where ease, and comfort, and competence, were ensured by a little address in screwing the people. But I must pass over other particulars of my journey, and take up my story from the time I entered Baroda, this being an interval of some days from my leaving the den of the Bheels.

The English Government was just at this period very suspicious of the Guicowar, having reason to fear he would join the confederated powers of the Deccan. Not thinking news of this nature could be of any

moment to me, I neglected to make particular inquiries respecting any change of affairs that might have happened in the court, and made my way directly to the palace. At Broach I had taken care to provide myself with the bow, arrows, and garb of a Bheel, and took the character as well as I could, covering myself with a cloak, that I might not be known for one in the streets of Baroda. On entering the palace I solicited an audience of the Guicowar: which was refused, until I stated my errand, and the object of my visit. This I whispered in the ear of an attendant; and the name of "Mulharia Bheel" acted like magic. I had an audience immediately; but, when in the presence of the Guicowar, my courage very nearly failed me. All the horrors I felt when personating the magician

before the Peeshwa at Poona, now came upon me again. It was impossible, I knew, to recede, and therefore I mustered courage to present the letter of the Bheel chief, saying, that Sumboo having expired suddenly, and Mulharia being pressed for time, I had been deputed to convey the letter. The Guicowar upon this called in his secretary, who with difficulty made out the contents of the epistle. After it had been read, both of them eyed me in a very pointed way, and retired into an inner apartment. I would have given double the sum I came to demand, had I possessed it, to have got clear out of the palace. In about an hour's time the Guicowar returned, and desired me to await his reply a little longer. Hearing an unusual bustle in the court below, I ventured to peep through

the window ; and, to my consternation, beheld the British resident there, whose arrival caused the guard to be turned out, and I witnessed the pomp with which he was received upon his entrance to the palace. Something now struck me that this visit was connected with my demand for the money ; and on the resident entering the room in which I was, and looking me very hard in the face, I was confirmed in the truth of my conjecture. “ Well,” thought I, “ my doom is fixed !” The Guicowar having called me to him, the carpet was turned back that I might not pollute it, and I approached him. “ Listen,” said he ; “ your master has taken a most unlucky time to make his demand upon me.” Thinking his highness was going to plead his inability to pay, or frame some excuse to

evade doing so, I plucked up courage, and said, “and most unlucky it will be for you and your villages, if the demand be not complied with. You have read the letter, and must be aware of the consequences of non-compliance.” — “Insolent scoundrel!” cried the Guicowar; “I will not only not comply with the audacious demand, but will make the bearer of it shorter by a head. Guards, seize that contumacious rebel—confine him in the lowest dungeons of the palace, and await my further orders respecting him.” I was instantly disarmed, and dragged down to the dungeons. A pretty business have I made of it, I reasoned to myself. All is now over! They brought me such provisions as a Bheel would not have refused, but which it would have polluted me to touch: such was the consequence of

my assuming a false character. The bearer of them appeared inclined to be communicative, though in a sarcastic way. He cried, “thou great deputy of Sumboo, and ambassador of Mulharia, eat thy fill to-day, to-morrow thou wilt die. What an idiot you were, to come and thrust your neck under the axe in the way you have done! Did you not know that the Guicowar and the English are now become sworn friends, and have entered into fresh treaties, in which they jointly engage to put down you rebel Bheels? The Guicowar now does not heed your threats—you can no more intimidate him. Oh, you ass! if your master had not known this, his ambassador should have had wit enough to have discovered it in Baroda, before he rushed into the very jaws of his enemy.” I now saw how needful it was to

have inquired into the state of political affairs before I rashly made my demand. "My friend," said I, "is it certain I am to die to-morrow?"—"Aye," he replied, "and ten thousand more of your gang, if we could lay our hands upon them. I always thought the Bheels were cunning fellows, but you are no specimen of their superior sagacity; Ram, Ram, thou Bheel ass!" On so concluding, he left me, as may be very easily guessed, in no enviable state of mind. There seemed no hope for me, either of mercy or escape. The next day came; my gaoler appeared again, but did not open his lips to me. Another and another passed away, in solitude and suspense. At length, I was summoned to appear in presence of the Guicowar and his ministers. The English resident was present; and I made up my

mind, should they sentence me to die, that I would fall at his highness's feet, and relate the whole affair as it really stood. To my indescribable joy, however, the Guicowar began by saying he would spare my life upon one condition, namely, that I should accompany the soldiers to the haunt of the Bheels as a guide, by which means they might be surprised and taken. "I know," said he, "that some of you thieves will often prefer dying to discovering the haunts of your associates; but do you be wise, and you will preserve your life; be foolish, and you perish. The English resident repeating the promise that my life should be spared, I fell down and related all that had befallen me: how I had been robbed by the Bheels; in what manner I had gained my money (taking on me the

name of Nanna), and the scheme I had planned to get reimbursed. I concluded my relation by stating, that I would with all my heart conduct the troops, as far as I could recollect the road, to the haunt of the robbers. All who were present were astonished and amused at my tale, and at the attempt to deceive both the Bheel and Guicowar. The resident, hearing I was the man who caused Trimbuckje to be apprehended, instantly became my friend.

I was now sent back to my dungeon, and ordered to hold myself in readiness to march with the troops in two days' time. I rejoiced in this delay, as I thought it would give my companions time to be off from the cavern before the soldiers surrounded the entrance, otherwise I feared they would be put to the sword with the rest. I enjoyed a sound

sleep on the ensuing night, though the harassing and pain of mind I had undergone did not lead me to expect it. My gaoler came to me on my return to my prison, and said, "So you are no Bheel, after all? Well, I thought as much; a Bheel would have been a little more circumspect in presenting such a letter to the Guicowar. You are a shrewd fellow though, for all that blunder; by Ishwar, you were very nigh pocketing the cash. A week earlier, and the Guicowar durst not have refused your demand. Come, as you are a Hindoo, you shall, if you like, cook your own food. Never counterfeit a Bheel again; it is a most hazardous character—scarcely safe in the jungles, much less within the walls of a palace." I thanked him for his advice, and promised to regard it as long as I lived: in

which it may be taken for granted I was sincere, as I bitterly repented my late exploit. When the fellow left me, I began to fear that my chance of meeting Nanna again was very little, unless he should hear a rumour of the events which had occurred at the palace; in that case, I conjectured he would wait in Baroda my return with the soldiers, for I most anxiously looked forward to the day when I should again see my friend, and tell him from what cause our plot miscarried.

Two days had elapsed; and, on the third, I was ordered by my masters to get ready for setting out. I replied, that I had no preparations to make, and that I was ready on the instant. I added, that I only waited their pleasure, and that they would have no difficulty in finding me at my post, for being found at which, I must confess my

obligation to them. At length I was led out, placed on a horse, and ordered to proceed, and lead the way at the head of a strong detachment of horse and foot soldiers, commanded by European officers. These very civilly informed me on starting, that they had orders to shoot me through the head, if I failed in my promise to conduct them to the right place. I told them, I was certain I could take them within a coss of the spot, but I could not answer for my memory explaining to me every turning and winding of the jungle, as if I had been an old inhabitant of the place, and that I trusted they would not expect me to do things that might be impossible. I swore I would do what I could to lead them to the direct spot, and assist them all in my power. They bade me lead on, and I set forward,

We were followed through the city by crowds of inquisitive persons, eager to get a sight of the sham Bheel, as they denominated me. I felt so much shame that I covered my head with a cloak, so that my eyes only could be seen, and thus proceeded beyond the city walls. Every house and window was filled with females anxious to get a sight of me. It was nearly at the limits of the city, and we were emerging from a narrow lane, in which a dwelling stood solitary and detached, when, going towards the gate, I cast my eyes to the upper windows crowded with females, all laughing at the cavalcade, and, (what language can describe my astonishment !) I beheld my dear Sagoonah, who was one of the anxious and inquisitive spectators awaiting the arrival of the sham Bheel. I could scarcely

keep my seat on horseback at the discovery. To see her, under such circumstances, for the first time after our separation, and to be unable to approach her and fold her to my bosom !—that she should see me thus a prisoner, dependant only on the will of others, and doing only what they commanded me to do, cut me to the heart. My consolation was, that she could not possibly recognize me, and my hope that, in a day or two, I might return again to Baroda and behold her free. I was happy indeed, when I reflected that I was forced to conceal my person, and that she could not witness the degradation to be mine. I grew so dejected in a little time that my escort began to think me an impostor. Why did I not push on with spirit, they repeated to each other ; I must therefore dread the termination of the

journey. "Well may he be afraid," said one soldier, "for the idea of a brace of bullets through his head cannot be a very cheering one."—"Oh, he will not be hurt," said another, "if he lead us to the place and perform his promise."—"True," replied the first speaker, "but I will wager a rupee he is leading us——"—"What?" said a third: "Why, where he does not know himself."—"We shall see," cried another voice, "if we are to be made fools of, and led through these unhealthy jungles for nothing; if we are, I hope I shall be employed to blow out his brains." These observations, or similar ones, were constantly making, and I was forced both to hear and to bear them in silence. I was in no very enviable situation, for I might easily go

wrong through the difficult, narrow, and overgrown paths which we had to pass along. This, as if to inflict still more torture upon me, was happening just as I got a glimmering of hope and happiness once more, by the discovery of Sagoonah. My thoughts added to my pain;—the shadow thus cast over my dream of bliss, the miscarriage of my plan, no friend near me, and scarcely able to congratulate myself on my escape from the jungles and fevers, before I was again compelled to breathe their pestiferous atmosphere, with a brace of pistols close to my head, ready to be discharged whenever the caprice of the holders should be inclined so to do. I had just escaped from the hazards of the wild beasts, to fall into the hands of men, far more

savage ! Could I forbear from appearing dispirited ?

We continued our march, until, in due course, we reached the jungles ; in which, after we had proceeded for two days, we arrived at the place where Nanna, Fuzl Khan, and myself had been captured by the Bheels. To the right of the spot lay the narrow path, by which we were led ; and I headed the soldiers in that direction. The underwood thickened, and the path became every step more difficult. I could not see an inch before me ; the vegetation rose far higher than our heads, and was very dense, and in some places united above us. I was still tolerably confident we were in the right way : yet I was not without my fears upon the subject, for we passed several turnings to the right and left. At length we came

to a gentle ascent, which I remembered I had gone over, not far from the cave. My spirits rose, though I feared what might be the fate of my old companions during the attack, should they by any chance expose themselves; but I thought my own safety was now secured. I bade the soldiers be on the alert; and I had scarcely so cautioned them, before we were involved in the gloomy shadow of the rock in which the cave was situated. It towered high in the air above us, rough and craggy; at the base was an arch which spanned the entrance to the strong-hold of the Bheels. A party of the soldiers dismounted, and drew up in a crescent around the entrance, while another forced its way in. The alarm was speedily spread to the inmost recesses of the hold. The Bheels resisted valiantly,

and the work of death began. Mulharia with his powerful arm made wonderful efforts to cut his way through the party that first entered—and succeeded; but he was shot outside the cave. The whole band were speedily overpowered and slain, except two, who were badly wounded; one of whom informed me that there were two prisoners in the vaults below. I there found Nanna and Fuzl Khan. It appeared that the British resident, suspecting the bearer of Mulharia's forced draft, refused to pay the money; and the latter, enraged, had subjected them to a severe imprisonment, and threatened their lives. Nanna inquired how he saw me there with soldiers; but I told him it was no moment for explanation then, and bade him follow me to the daylight. I led my two

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friends forth to the officers commanding the detachment, introducing them as my companions in misfortune, and begging they might be allowed to accompany us back to Baroda. My request was immediately acceded to; and all being anxious to quit the jungles, we set out for Guzerat on our return. The officers commanding told me I was at liberty to go wherever I pleased, they having no orders to take me back with them, in the event of my performing my promise. I begged, however, to be allowed to proceed with them, to which they agreed.

Nanna, Fuzl Khan, and myself brought up the rear of the party; and the soldiers being a little in advance, Fuzl Khan said, "Nanna, after you went, told me of your scheme. How have you succeeded? Have

you secured the money of the Guicowar?" —“ Let us hear all about it,” said Nanna; “ how came you here with soldiers ?” I speedily satisfied their curiosity, and related the danger I had encountered. “ If,” said Fuzl Khan, “ you had deigned to consult me on the subject, I could have told you how the affair would terminate. These Guzerat rajahs never come down with cash; nothing but mortars and nine-pounders can extract it from them. Mulharia of course tried all he could to frighten the Guicowar out of his money; but he knew there was little or no chance of succeeding: and for you two fellows, who pretend to be so sharp and cunning, to be entrapped by a Bheel’s paltry scrawl—I am surprised at you! Consult me the next time, I pray you. I am not such a fool as to have acted as you

did, and can see as far forward as any one. But you are a bold fellow, I must allow, to enter a palace, and act the part of a Bheel there ! I wonder your head was not struck off on the spot !” There was much good sense in Fuzl Khan’s remark ; and both Nanna and myself found, on reflection, that his observations were unanswerable.

We at length reached Baroda in safety, and put up at a comfortable durhm sallah. I now informed Nanna that I had seen Sagoonah looking from a window in the part of the town which I have before-mentioned. He advised me to lose no time, but to repair thither at once, and make inquiries, offering to accompany me. I accepted his offer, and we proceeded together to reconnoitre the house. I cannot describe the transport I felt when we set out ; and I

hoped to clasp my beloved girl once more to my heart. What was my disappointment on finding that Sagoonah and her aunt had set out four days before, and taken the road to Surat! that they lived with a rich old grain-dealer, who provided for them—Sagoonah's aunt acting as his housekeeper. Having nothing more to detain us in Baroda I determined to follow their steps. Fuzl Khan was charmed at the idea of once more seeing Broach, which lay in our route; for, in returning from the jungles, the soldiers took a nearer way back to Baroda than by passing through Surat and Broach—so Fuzl Khan had missed seeing his native city. Before we set off, Nanna wished to obtain some money by drawing a bill on the British resident; but not one of the sahoukars or bankers

would cash it unless he found security for its payment, or until a reply could be got from Kandeish. This he could not do; and thus every chance of getting money at Baroda vanished. It was possible I might overtake Sagoonah at Broach; and therefore I went to the house where I had seen her, and inquired the name of the grain-dealer with whom she was travelling. They told me he was called Hurrychund Doolabdass, a very infirm old man, whose love of money was so great, he would not leave off trade while he had an eye left, or leg remaining to stand upon. In consequence of his age he travelled very slowly; and there was every reason to think I should overtake him at Broach. If we were fortunate enough to do this (which Nanna agreed to try by forced marches), there could be no doubt

the old merchant would advance the cash upon the draft of Nanna on the resident, as Sagoonah would, no doubt, answer for our characters. We accordingly set out, without a single rupee in our pockets. Fuzl Khan was the first to complain of hunger, and declared he could not walk another coss* without something to eat. Just at this moment we met some bullock-drivers, and begged a little rice or grain of them, which they kindly gave us on explaining our necessities; and thus we contrived to reach the end of our first day's march, very much fatigued.

* About two miles.

CHAP. II.

WE arrived at Broach without any incident of note occurring to us, and entered safely into that sink of filth and abomination. I made inquiry at the grain-dealer's bazaar for Hurrychund, the merchant; and, to my great joy, heard he was then sojourning at the house of one of the principal grain-dealers. I lost not a moment in going thither; and, at last, folded Sagoonah in my arms. Her joy at seeing me was excessive: she thought I had forgotten her, or deserted her for some other girl. "At one time I would doubt your constancy," she said; "and then I thought you might be a prisoner, or, perhaps, no more. Tell me all—

tell me where you have been, and why so long separated from us?" I observed to her that my sufferings had been great; but that I had abated nothing in my affection for her, and had vowed to find her out, if I searched the world over for her: that now I had succeeded, and we would part no more. Her aunt was also overjoyed at seeing me, and immediately cooked a very comfortable repast for me—a luxury I had not enjoyed for many a day before. I begged leave to introduce Nanna, and went and fetched him. I found him in the house, endeavouring to negotiate his draft with old Hurryhund: who refused to make him an advance, until assured by Sagoonah that we were not swindlers, and that he might rely upon my word. Nanna gave a bill upon the British resident at Kandeish; but

took only one hundred rupees. Nanna came to dine with us; and, on introducing him, I pointed him out as being one to whom we were indebted for the removal of one of our foes, Trim buckje Danglia. "Thank Heaven!" said the lovely girl; "he is no longer to be dreaded; he has, indeed, been an inveterate enemy!"

We had finished our conversation, and were just going to dine, when a sudden dizziness of head came over me, and my brain seemed to whirl round. Fever succeeded; and I found the pestiferous air of the jungles had begun to act upon my constitution. My late march on foot, joined to my anxiety of mind, had, no doubt, contributed to increase its virulence. Instead of enjoying the company of Sagoonah, I was doomed to toss on a bed of

fever, and to writhe in delirium. Day after day the fever continued to visit me: sometimes the cold fit would make my jaws chatter, and seem to freeze my blood; then a burning heat would parch up my mouth, and bring with it temporary madness. How long I continued in this state I cannot tell; but I found myself one morning in a violent perspiration, and felt better. The first person I knew was Sagoonah, watching me like a Peri—anxiety in her countenance, and her tenderness standing in her eyes. The sight almost repaid me for my sufferings; and I was about to speak, when she anticipated me, by desiring me not to make an effort too great for my strength; and, pressing my emaciated hand, bid me be composed. At the foot of my bed was an Englishman, who, I learned, was my doc-

tor, and that his skill had brought me back from the brink of the grave. As soon as I was well able to converse I inquired for Nanna, and found that he was also slowly recovering from the fever. Of Fuzl Khan nothing was known, though it appeared he had escaped it ; as a Mahomedan had, I found, called daily, to make inquiries after me ; I requested the next time he called I might see him. The doctor soon pronounced me out of danger, and I thanked him most gratefully for the care he had bestowed upon me. He asked if I could account for the attack — if I knew any cause ? I thereupon gave him the history of my visit to the jungles, and my return ; and advised him, should duty or inclination lead him to visit the Deccan, by all means to avoid the jungles of Kandeish. He as-

sured me he should do so most scrupulously ; for he had never, or rarely, witnessed a species of fever more violent than that from which I was recovering. He told me that Nanna's restoration was certain, but slow, he not having had attentions bestowed upon him similar to those on me by Sagoonah ; nor had he taken his medicine regularly, or he would have been further advanced in a state of convalescence than he then was. From this I learned the additional value of female kindness. Again and again I thanked and blessed the girl to whom I owed so much, and whose unremitting attention had rescued me from the grave.

I now gained fresh strength daily, and had a great desire to hear from Sagoonah her history while we were separated from

each other; I therefore besought her to give me a minute detail of her sufferings and adventures, promising to relate mine in return.

She thus commenced.—“ After your departure we resided in the village, and nothing interrupted our peace for a considerable time. At last a religious old woman called on my aunt one day, and endeavoured to persuade us to visit the temple to perform our devotions. My aunt consented to go on the following day. The woman said, that there was the same night to be a grand ceremony, when every one should attend, and advised us to be there at an hour she named. We agreed to this, and she left us, evidently much pleased at getting our consent. After she was gone I ventured to hint my suspicion to my aunt that all was not

right, and that I distrusted this old hag. I called to her recollection the warnings you gave us against admitting religious mendicants into the house, and declared my determination not to go to the temple, either by day or night. My aunt now began to open her eyes, and suspect all was not correct—upon calling to mind several things in the woman's conduct which had not struck her at the time, particularly a suspicious anxiety on the subject. In consequence we did not attend the ceremony, but staid at home. On the following day the old woman called again; but we had previously given orders that she should not be admitted, and she went away highly incensed. A gossein next tried to gain admittance, but without success, as we were of course on our guard against the whole tribe. We now never

ventured to stir from home, and admitted no strangers: all our precautions, however, were useless; for violence effected what fraud had been unable to perform. Our house was one night surrounded by armed men, and we were dragged from our beds, and borne off on horseback at a rapid rate. The persons who committed this outrage were in the employ of Trimbuckje, and we had no power to do any thing but submit to our lot. In due time we reached Asseerghur, into the citadel of which we were conducted, and locked up for the night in a narrow cell. In the morning we were taken before the killehdar, who was smoking his hookah. He asked me if I was not a fool to refuse the brilliant offers of Trimbuckje Danglia. I told him, that as I had refused the still more brilliant offers of the

Peeshwa, it was not probable I should accept those of his slave. The killehdar then said, ' Insolent girl ! you shall repent this contumacious conduct. Remember, in a week's time I shall again call upon you for an answer; and if you still remain an enemy to your own happiness, we must try other means to force a compliance.' We were now dismissed, and again locked up in the cell, and fed upon the coarsest grain. Our guards were sullen, or I should have asked why we were not at once conveyed to Trim-buckje Danglia, and what necessity there was for detaining us longer in Asseerghur. In the course of the week a compassionate woman, the wife of the jummahdar deputy, visited us, and we learned from her that Trim-buckje was involved at that time in much difficulty, and could not at the mo-

ment receive us. In fact, we found that he was actually a prisoner, though he hoped soon to be set free, when he would no doubt turn his thoughts towards me. We lingered in our cell week after week, almost starved, and clothed with miserable blankets; at length we found that Trimbuckje had escaped, and would soon appear in the Deccan again. We now thought that if there was a possibility of escape we should try it now; for should Trimbuckje arrive in the fort, we should be irretrievably ruined. The only thing was, how we could effect such a thing, confined and watched as we were. We could come to no determination, until the female who had before taken compassion on us, came again, and gave us provisions and sundry articles of comfort. We lamented our hard fate to her, and she

pitied our sufferings—this led us to indulge the hope, that through her means we might contrive some mode of escape. Our intimacy increased daily, and we at length ventured to hint our wish that she would assist us in obtaining our enlargement. She lent a favourable ear to our applications, but declared her inability to be of service. We acknowledged our obligations to her for her repeated kindness; and, as a token of remembrance, I presented her with some of my hair, braided with silver wire, which she said she should carefully preserve for my sake.” Here I interrupted Sagoonah, by telling her I had seen the trinket, which was very dear to me, and I wore it next my heart until the Bheels robbed me of it. I now explained how it came into my possession, relating my adventure with the very

woman to whom she was under such obligations, and my having preserved her from being plundered; which she was overjoyed to hear. Sagoonah then resumed her story: “One day the wife of the jummahdar’s deputy communicated to us a plan by which we effected our escape. My heart beat with joy at the idea of getting beyond the walls of the fortress, and I fell at the feet of our deliverer, kissing them with rapture. She raised me up, and bid us be cautious, stating that she had obtained permission for us to visit her at her house that day, and in the evening she intended going down the hill to pay her devotions to her god, when she was always attended by two of her retinue, whose clothes she proposed we should wear, and thus pass the gates without suspicion. Her own servants

were to take our characters, and be conducted to the prison in our stead. As soon as the affair was discovered, and the servants were found not to be what they represented, they would be discharged; if the mistress was suspected, her husband would only be fined, and she herself come off with a scolding. This plan was duly carried into effect. We paid our visit to the lady, who took us through the gates in safety. How my heart beat when I found myself outside the fort! We took a hasty and grateful farewell of our kind friend, thanking her with tears of joy. She advised us to fly from that part of the country with all expedition. We followed her advice and made for the jungles, near which at a late hour of the night we came to a glen, where was the habitation of an old goatherd. We

knocked at his door for admittance; but when he found we had escaped from the fort, he was very anxious for our departure, fearing he might suffer if it were known he had afforded us shelter. Very early the next morning, before he arose, we again set off and struck into a road on the left, among ragged pathways and waterfalls. Whether we were travelling on the right road we could not tell; but trusting to fortune, and being sensible that every step took us farther from the place of our captivity, we kept on until we came to a river, so shallow as to allow us to ford it. Here my aunt became so much fatigued she could proceed no further; we therefore sat down under a tree, and eat some dried grain which the goatherd had given us, and drank water from the river. When somewhat refreshed

we renewed our journey until evening gathered in around us. We fortunately met some bullock-drivers, and my aunt asked the men if we were on the right road to Guzerat, and how far we were from Nasik. To our great disappointment, we learned that Nasik was three days' journey from the spot we then stood, and that there was only one village on the way. I called out in despair to my aunt, 'Arry Mousee, what shall we do?'—'By Ishwar,' said one of the drivers, 'I have heard that voice before;' and coming up to me, rudely uncovered my face, saying, 'Ah! my little traveller, what is it you again? where is your protector now?' You may conjecture what my fears were at the moment, when I state that this fellow was the impertinent bullock-driver who accompanied us from

Poona to Seroor and pretended you were gone forward. 'I have got you now,' continued the scoundrel, 'and shall take the liberty of carrying you with me as far as Asseerghur. 'Tis strange if I don't turn a penny of you some way or another.' On hearing Asseerghur named, my aunt screamed; upon which the driver said, 'I see how it is—you have escaped from thence. This is fortunate for me; I shall be sure of a reward for bringing you back again. So come, mount my bullock, my pretty girl, and make up your mind to return whence you came.' So severe a disappointment quite overcame me, and I fell senseless to the earth. At this moment a man on horseback came up, desiring to know the cause of the delay. He was a grain-dealer, accompanying the laden beasts. I begged him to

interfere and release us, saying, we were unfortunate women seized by the driver; upon which the latter declared I was his wife, whom he had lost for a long time, and that now having found me, he determined upon never quitting me again.' I declared it was all false, and fell at the merchant's feet, as did my aunt, telling him the fellow wanted to get a reward for bringing us again into a captivity from whence we had escaped, and that we preferred death to returning to the fort. The merchant, fearing we should delay his cattle, and he lose his market, ordered the fellow to let us go immediately and to proceed. The driver, though very sullen, was forced to obey, grumbling to us that he would be even with us yet—some one should soon be after us. We thanked our deliverer, who

recommended us to call on Hurrychund Doolabdass, in that place, who was about to proceed to Surat, and he probably would allow us to follow in his suite. He also directed us on the way to Nasik. We begged his name by means of which perhaps Hurrychund might sooner notice us. He told us he was called Toolseram, and so bid us farewell.

Being now free of the impertinent driver, we once more indulged hopes of a safe arrival at Guzerat, and made use of every effort to gain the first halting-place, which was a miserable durhm sallah, without a village near it, or any kind of comfort whatever. I need not tire you with a detail of our sufferings on our journey, but merely state that after encountering the most severe hardships, we reached Nasik. Our first

care was to find out Hurrychund, in which we succeeded. We communicated to him the circumstances by which we became known to Toolseram the grain-dealer. He congratulated us upon our escape, and offered us lodgings for the night, stating that in a day or two he should proceed towards Guzerat, and if we pleased we might accompany him. We cooked our rice, and my aunt out of compliment sent the old merchant some *sheeree pooree* (a dish in the making of which she excelled). Hurrychund was so pleased, that he declared no one else should cook for him in future but my aunt, and she has ever since superintended his household affairs, and cooked his victuals herself. We reached Baroda in safety, travelling by easy stages, not through the jungles, but by a more circuitous route.

At Baroda we lived in a narrow lane——” Here I interrupted her by saying I knew that, for there I saw her. “Saw me!” said Sagoonah, “and would not come to me! oh, Pandurang!” I said I would have given worlds to have flown to her arms; but when she heard the circumstances under which I was situated, she would acquit me of neglect. I inquired if she did not remember the sham Bheel, and informed her that I was the person—the very sham Bheel whom she laughed at from the window. Sagoonah hereupon made me relate all the circumstances that had taken place since we met before, which I now found myself strong enough to do. Sagoonah was much struck with the history of Mahadeo, the first Pindaree, and made me relate it over again to her aunt.

The latter declared her firm belief that Gabbage had murdered his nephew, to whom Sagoonah had been betrothed. "Aye," cried I, "and his brother also, the poor boy's father." She said she very much doubted that, for she had heard from good authority that he had escaped the vengeance of Gunput Rao. I then continued my history, and made them laugh heartily at the tale of Fuzl Khan. When I stated that the plan of old Gabbage was to force Sagoonah to marry his son Mahadeo, the women were both astonished at the old scoundrel's knavery and art. Sagoonah declared she would die sooner than be wedded to the son of such a fiend, though he were to be crowned king of the world. They now more valued the state of security in which they found themselves, and congratu-

tulated one another on their lucky escape from Asseerghur. The women were also rejoiced to find that their rich relation was at present in existence at Satarah, though the belief of his having entered deeply into the views of the pretender to the musnud, Gunput Rao, greatly embittered the pleasure they would otherwise have felt, as it was impossible, under such circumstances, that they could ever approach him. We talked over the mysterious appearance of the old goatherd of the glen, and from the words which I had overheard Gabbage use, it struck us as very probable he might be that villain's brother, and the rightful successor to the musnud of Satarah. This surmise gathered strength from the concern he displayed, when I informed him that Gabbage still lived, and from this information it was

that he gathered he was not in security where he then resided. The rest of my adventures amused the women much; but they censured me severely for acting the part of the Bheel, at Baroda, and were astonished how I could present the letter without first seeing my way clear as to the state of matters at court. The certainty that the bullock-driver would give information to Gabbage respecting the women greatly annoyed us. He would be sure to find the gossein at Asseerghur, and Kokoo we were certain would be after us, whether the driver gave information or not.

Our conversation was concluded by our receiving a message from Nanna, whom I was able to inform that I was much better, and hoped soon to see. The fever had not yet left him altogether, and he was still very

low. Fuzl Khan also called to learn how I was: and when Sagoonah saw him she could not help smiling at the recollection of his extraordinary adventures. I had now been nearly twenty days on the bed of sickness, and Nanna very nearly as many. Fuzl Khan had no money, nor any means of subsistence. He succeeded pretty well at first among his old Mahomedan acquaintance. His father had gone to Surat, and had set up a grinding-shop there. Nanna advanced him a few rupees, as he was useful to us on many occasions. One particular duty we assigned him, which was to watch all strangers, and see if he could discern Kokoo or Gabbage in the town. We accurately described their persons to him, and he promised to use his utmost vigilance. I also made him promise he

would not engage either in puchees or eki beki, but keep quiet until we could get him some situation. At length I found myself perfectly recovered, and thought it was become time to seek out the means of obtaining a livelihood. Sagoonah spoke to Hurrychund for me, who in a little time procured me the situation of a writer under the Nazir of the udalut or court of justice at Broach.

The Nazir is a perpetual sheriff, and executes writs and summonses to all the parties required to attend in civil and criminal cases. Nanna contrived, by paying enormous fees, to get employed in the police department, so that thus, doubly armed with authority, we conceived ourselves a fair match for Kokoo, should he venture to appear at Broach with any hostile inten-

tions. Fuzl Khan was made a peon in the udalut, and thus we were all provided for.

The system adopted by the English government for the administration of justice, however admirable in theory, is in many respects liable to perversion by those who carry it into effect. The artful agents of the court-house were perpetually on the look-out, to take advantage of every new regulation or decision of the judge. My duty was to make out the summonses, and copy papers of importance. Nanna was also fully employed, and for three months we enjoyed uninterrupted peace. News reached us from the Deccan that Badjerao had surrendered to the English, who were now its sole masters. Broach, and all the stations in Guzerat, continued in their usual

quiet state. The deposed king of Satarah was once more placed upon his musnud by the all-conquering English: but his health was in such a precarious state, it was supposed he could not enjoy his newly recovered power for any length of time. I heard also that a person named Gunput Rao, attended by his son, had openly declared himself successor to the throne, and that on the demise of the present rajah, there was no doubt but the English would acknowledge his claims, no one appearing to dispute them. This intelligence was of great consequence to Sagoonah, who now more than ever wished to keep out of her uncle's reach.

We still remained in peace at Broach, and I will now take the opportunity of letting the reader know the nature of the

duties which my new situation required, and give a brief account of the manner in which the English organized our court.

CHAP. III.

THE court of Broach consisted of the judge, a registrar, and an assistant registrar—all Englishmen, acquainted with the native languages. The first of course, from a longer residence in the country, was the most experienced man of the three, and was accordingly at the head of the department. Before the judge suits involving any amount were tried; before the registrar only those which did not exceed five hundred rupees. Independently of the decision of civil suits, the registrar's business was to register all bonds and deeds of importance, receiving a fee of two rupees for every bond so registered. The assistant registrar was generally

a young man lately arrived in the country, to whom the management of a few easy suits, of small amount, was intrusted, upon each of which a regulated fee was paid. The registrar also received established fees, in proportion to the amount of suits decided by him; but the judge received a regular income, and had no fees of any description. The judge also decided criminal as well as civil causes, and was consequently employed every day in the year. Some of my countrymen, who knew nothing of the true state of things, imagined these officers had nothing to do but amuse themselves and make money—they were greatly in error; the duties were most laborious, and the pay scarcely adequate to the labour performed. Two days every week suits were filed, numbered, and distributed to the per-

sons authorized to decide upon them. In a city like Broach or Surat, the file was never clear, although the judges worked hard every day. New cases constantly poured in, much faster than the old could be got rid of, and, without the greatest attention and regularity, the file would accumulate so great a number of causes for hearing, that no judge could get through it. A reader and writer belonged to this court. The first read the plaintiff's petition. The judge then called for the defendant's reply: which being read, was entered, as well as the petition, in the record book, by the attendant's writer, whose business it was to number and enter every document read before the judge. After the answer of the defendant was read, a second statement was heard from the plaintiff, and then a rejoinder from the

defendant; but no other documents were admitted. The plaintiff was then called upon to prove his assertions, which he did by parole or documentary testimony, and after him the defendant was called on to disprove them. The judge then gave judgment.

Supposing the parties involved in a suit are not confident in their own skill and management of their affairs on the trial, the government vakeels or pleaders, natives of the country, were ready to plead for them, and conduct their cases through. Everything was done with the greatest order and regularity: no confusion, no squabbling, or pulling off turbans, or coarse abuse was allowed. All had equal access to the judge in his regular and appointed turn. O my poor countrymen of the Deccan, I used to

think, how differently these matters were managed with you! No feeing or bribery was allowed at Broach, no gratuities to greedy arbitrators and potails, &c. But, with all its excellencies and advantages, the good intentions of the government were too often perverted, even there, and unsuspecting judges imposed upon. Still such cases were rare, and if detected, were severely punished. The mode thus adopted at Broach, and the wish to render strict justice to all, were so much approved by the people, that they contrived to keep the files of the respective courts crammed full. There were not persons wanting who urged this as an argument against the very way in which the English administered justice, urging that it promoted litigation, and advising that the people should keep to the old rules of their

fathers. Such a class of fatuitous reasoners is never wanting in any country, to fling dirt upon improvements, and extol custom beyond common sense. The old system of arbitration, which I may hereafter touch upon, being the institution of past times, was that which those who did not take the trouble to examine into the reason of things, extolled to the skies. The singular circumstances of my life, threw me into many situations wherein I had opportunities of making my observations on both systems. But I must first mention here, that the inhabitants and subjects of the government at Broach, and the neighbouring places, were in general very well satisfied with the dispensation of justice made for them; trade flourished, and each individual felt secure in his property. That the establishment of

the udalut, or court of justice, was the reason that causes were increased, is very incorrect. Justice had not before been attainable, and the people were obliged to endure wrong, for which they had no redress. When they found that injustice could no longer exist with impunity, they poured their grievances into the court. It might therefore as well be asserted that the erection of an hospital was the cause of an increase of sickness, as that giving the people an opportunity of gaining justice, was the cause of the increase of applications to the courts. From the judge at Broach, an appeal lay to the superior court of Surat, called the court of appeal, and from thence to the sudr udalut at Bombay: what more could be wished or desired? The criminal code of regulations was equally good. The

judge, though he had the power of committing a felon, did not try him. A circuit court was established, and one of its members went round to the different stations and held a gaol delivery: so that the committal by the resident judge, was frequently no more than for safe custody till trial, when the prisoner was set at liberty.

Through the interest of Hurrychund, I at length obtained the situation of pleader in the court of udalut, in the registrar's department, and was now quite a man of consequence. Nanna continued attached to the police, and Fuzl Khan was still a peon, and carried a sword. Old Hurrychund had a nephew, who was lately married at Surat. The new-married couple arrived at Broach to visit him, and I was invited to dine with them on the first day

of their arrival. The bride was accompanied by her mother; the former named Beema Bhae, and the latter Anundee Bhae. Beema was in height and figure very like Sagoonah. Nanna was invited at the same time, and we had a very pleasant party. Before we separated, Hurrychund proposed giving a dinner to the caste of Marwarrys, of which he was a member. His nephew having no objection, invitations were sent out the following day, and the dinner was fixed to take place in four days' time. All the caste, save one individual named Premje, were invited. This person was considered an outcast, for some cause which I never heard explained. The dinner was accordingly given, and about one hundred and twenty Marwarrys partook of it. In the middle of the dinner, a man entered

the room among the guests, and demanded why he was excluded, saying, he was a Marwarry, and would come also. All was immediately bustle and confusion, and the party demanded that he should be excluded or turned out. Poor Premje seemed in a dreadful passion, but it availed him little; he was turned away by the company unanimously. Temporary booths are erected before the doors of persons giving entertainments at Broach; and, indeed, in many other parts of Hindustan, and the street is for the time blocked up. Premje, though ejected from the booth, would not go away, but stood on the outside, grumbling, and asserting his right to be invited to the dinner. At length some of the guests were favourably inclined towards him, and said, that Hurrychund had treated him

harshly: that since the alleged charges (for which he was now excluded) had been made against him, he had been seen at dinner with Gopaldass, the banker; and that was precedent enough for giving him an invitation on the present occasion. Being myself seated near the entrance of the booth, I heard Premje declare he would bring an action against Hurrychund, for fixing such a stigma upon his character; and with this threat he departed. The entertainment being over, I acquainted Hurrychund with Premje's threat; who laughed, and said, "Well, Pandoo, if he does bring his action, recollect I retain you for my counsel, and hope you will get him worsted." I thanked him for his good intentions towards me, and told him, if Premje did put his threat into execution, I would

do my best in his behalf. The following day was the first filing-day in the court; and, true to his threat, Premje thrust in his petition, or rather declaration against Hurrychund: which was admitted, and numbered in the usual way; and a day was appointed for hearing the cause. Premje's vakeel was a clever fellow, named Atchoo Bhae, who, as soon as he knew his opponent was to be Pandurang, the Mahratta pleader, snapped his fingers exultingly, and declared he would beat me so hollow, that I should be ashamed ever again to shew my face in court. In the evening I visited Hurrychund, my client, and informed him that Premje had actually commenced proceedings against him, and begged him to furnish me with materials for his defence. The first question he asked me was, the

amount of damages laid ; and I informed him that the sum was five hundred rupees, and that the cause would be tried before the registrar. “ ’Tis a large sum,” said Hurrychund, “ and you must speak loud, Pandoo, and do your best.” I promised him I would exert myself to the utmost ; and was beginning to take down the heads for defence, when one of the Nazir’s peons entered, bearing a summons to Hurrychund, who was obliged to accompany him, to put in security for his appearance at the day of trial. This having been accomplished, the old merchant returned, and duly instructed me how I was to proceed, and conduct the defence. My attention from the civil side of the court was drawn away, just as I had left Hurrychund, to the criminal department. As I quitted the door I met a

mob approaching, and heard a voice calling out (which I knew to be Fuzl Khan's) begging me to save him and his friends from ruin. On inquiry, I discovered that he and two of his Mahomedan acquaintance had committed a theft, and were all apprehended, and expected to find bail in Hurrychund's house; in which they were disappointed, as I refused to interfere with the old man in their behalf—they were, I knew, such determined reprobates. Fuzl and his companions were consequently led away to prison. These true believers had for some time carried on a system of gaming, and were at last reduced to the extremity of committing a theft to raise funds for the support of themselves and their malpractices. The words of Fuzl Khan's mother, that eki beki would be his ruin, were thus

verified. I immediately repaired to Nanna, and informed him of both these affairs. That of Premje he considered of most importance; as to the second, he contented himself with the observation, that Fuzl Khan ought to have been hanged long ago ! I replied, as to that, it was not for us to pass judgment upon him, as we were far from being immaculate ourselves. Nanna did not much relish this remark, though he could not deny its justice ; and he therefore turned off the conversation, and began to inquire particulars concerning the action with Premje. As I was pleader on the side of the defendant, I deemed it prudent to say as little on the subject as I could, and carefully to avoid letting out any part of the defence. I contented myself, therefore, with remarking, that I was confident

of success ; and I left him, expressing a hope that as Fuzl Khan came soon under his department, he would try and do all he could for him. He nodded assent ; but Nanna was too much of a Mahratta to take trouble without a fee for any one ; and as poor Fuzl could not bestow one, I was pretty certain no one would care a rush about him. For my own part, however willing I might be to serve him, I dared not risk offering a fee to carry into effect my good intentions respecting him, holding the situation I did ; he was, therefore, left to his fate.

The day of the trial of Hurrychund's cause came on. The court was crowded ; even the windows were filled with spectators of all descriptions, anxious to see the new pleader, and hear the arguments used to exculpate

Hurrychund. The moment the opening of the cause took place, Atchoo Bhae, the pleader for the plaintiff, came forward, holding his client Premje by the hand. I approached alone, Hurrychund not choosing to be present. We stood in front of a large desk, at which the registrar sat. He was a little mean-looking man, very ill tempered. I never saw a more strange mortal. He looked like some of our deities, red-haired, with gooseberry eyes, and a great belly. He was so sour, that I was half afraid to address him. The declaration against the defendant was read. It complained that Premje Bohun, a Marwarry merchant, and inhabitant of the city of Broach, where he had resided for many years, gaining an honest livelihood by trade and fair dealing; had ever adhered to the rules of the caste

to which he belonged, and had been admitted to all assemblages of caste, within or without the city walls, until the fifth day of the current month; when Hurrychund Doolabdass invited the whole of the Marwarry caste to a dinner, in celebration of the marriage of his nephew, Goolchund. In consequence, the whole caste assembled at Hurrychund's house; and, in booths erected for the occasion, partook of the entertainment so given: but that he, Premje, was excluded, as he did not receive any invitation; and that his character was much injured, and he was much aggrieved in consequence. That, hoping the omission was unintentional on the part of Hurrychund, he proceeded to the place of feasting, and entered the booth; from which he was rudely turned out, and ordered to

go away. That he, therefore, sought compensation in damages for the injury sustained by him in loss of character, to the amount of five hundred rupees. This sum, if recovered, he intended to expend in giving a dinner to his caste, and in promoting every object that could tend to reinstate him in his former place in society, and thus remedy the injustice done him by the conduct of the defendant.

To this allegation I answered as follows: —“ First, that he set forth he had ever adhered to the rules of his caste, and had been admitted to the assemblages of the Marwarry tribe on all occasions, until neglected by Hurrychund. Now, as to this point, no reply need be made, as the dinner was one, not given by Hurrychund, the defendant, to celebrate the marriage of his

nephew : the dinner was not a caste dinner given by Hurrychund, but a private feast, given and paid for by his nephew Goolchund ; consequently, the present defendant could not be called upon to pay damages for a neglect of which he had not been guilty. This assertion could be proved by witnesses. It is admitted that Premje was not invited ; but, if he had sustained any injury, he must sue the nephew, and not the uncle :” I consequently prayed that the plaintiff might be nonsuited. I next called my witnesses, who were persons present at the dinner : and they proved that the invitations sent to them were not in the name of Hurrychund, but of his nephew. Other witnesses proved that Goolchund paid them or the various articles supplied to the entertainment.

The above was a defence which the plaintiff was not prepared to meet. The ugly little judge, after asking a few questions, nonsuited Premje, adjudging him to pay all costs. Premje went away, determined to commence an action against Goolchund the nephew: an arrangement we were not sorry for, as it would bring more fees into court. Hurrychund was pleased at my having put Premje to so much expense for nothing, and richly enjoyed the fellow's blunder. Sagoonah, too, congratulated me on my success in my first attempt; and the pleasure it seemed to give her was a spur to further diligence in my professional exertions.

Before the second suit was commenced, Fuzl Khan was brought to trial. He had been imprisoned from the moment he was

apprehended. The circuit judge arrived, and held his court at the udalut in great pomp, attended by the registrar and the moulavee, the cazee * and two shastrees.† It appeared that Fuzl Khan, in his capacity of peon, was employed to attach the property of a cloth-merchant, and ordered to keep guard over it. They who ordered him on this service little knew his character, or they would not have employed him in such a duty. Instead of guarding the property, he admitted two of his gambling associates to the warehouse, and all three helped themselves to the choicest muslins, kinkobs, and other fine articles. They were detected by one of the party wearing a rich muslin turban, and the other disposing of a shawl for half price at a pawnbroker's. Fuzl

* Mahomedan law-officers.

† Hindoo law-officers.

Khan's house was searched ; and stolen property being found there, he was apprehended immediately. All three were found guilty, and sentenced to be imprisoned and kept to hard labour on the roads for one year. The next time I encountered my friend Fuzl, he was working in the registrar's garden, with irons on his legs. The fellow was singing away very merrily—but, when he saw me, he stopped and began conversation, reproaching me with having abandoned him in the needful moment. I satisfied him it was out of my power to have assisted him, or I should have rejoiced in being able to do so, and thus prevent his becoming the sad spectacle he now was. I gave him a few pice and went my way.

The time for the new trial of Premje against Goolchund drew near. I was pre-

pared to defend the cause. At the hour fixed, the court was crowded, and the windows filled with people: one of these windows looked into the yard; and being open, a number of persons stood on the outside, and thrust in their heads. The window was exactly opposite the place in which I stood to plead. Goolchund himself was present, and full of anxiety, lest he should have to pay five hundred rupees. He repeatedly prompted me to speak loud, and to the purpose. The declaration was read, and was the same as the first, with the alteration of the name of the defendant. I had to prove that the dinner was not a marriage-dinner, because that must, according to rule, have been given at Surat, where the ceremony took place. It was moreover necessary to prove we were fully justified in

not inviting the plaintiff even if it were considered a caste meeting. To do this, I could prove the plaintiff had, on a former occasion, been overlooked at a great meeting of the caste at the house of a principal Marwarry, who gave a dinner on the death of his father. Moreover I could prove the plaintiff an outcast, having committed some fault which rendered him unfit to be admitted among the good and correct men of his tribe. The plaintiff, on the other side, was prepared to rebut this evidence respecting himself. The witnesses on my part were sharply cross-examined by Atchoo, the pleader, on Premje's behalf, and we all eyed each other as if life and death depended on the issue of the trial. Goolchund was constantly pulling my sleeve, and proposing many silly questions to be put to the plain-

tiff and his witnesses. At length we got so far, that I rose to address the court. I stated that I could produce a witness, whose testimony would not leave a doubt on the mind of the judge as to the character of the plaintiff; and having heard him, the issue of the trial could not be otherwise than favourable to us. Having spoken to this effect, I cast my glance towards the persons who were looking in at the window, purely from accident; but how can I express the agitation and alarm I felt, when, among the group, I recognized Kokoo, with the ass-driver by his side! My papers fell from my hand—I stood without motion. A trembling came over me; and, notwithstanding my client Goolchund pulled my sleeve nearly to pieces, my eyes remained fixed on the window, from which I had no power to take

them. At length I saw they were gone, and picked up my papers; but I still gazed around me bewildered, until the registrar demanded what was the matter. Goolchund replied, the people at the window disturbed me: upon which they were ordered to retire, and the window was closed. The registrar then called on me to name the important witness I stated I should call. Goolchund named him to me, but I pronounced the name in a most confused manner. He appeared, however, and was sworn in; but I had not a question to put to him—all had been driven from my recollection. I confounded Premje with Goolchund, and *vice versa*. Of these things Atchoo took the advantage, and urged the badness of my cause from the ill way in which I was able to support it. He pulled my poor witness so to

pieces, that he deposed things the very opposite to what I intended he should have done. Goolchund endeavoured to speak, but was not allowed, as I was his vakeel, and only one of us could be heard; at length the judge, tired at the delay and confusion which I had caused, decided in favour of Premje, and ordered Goolchund to pay the sum of five hundred rupees, with costs of suit. After this decision, we of course could not be heard there, but we were told we might appeal to the judge's court, if dissatisfied. Thus ended a cause which, had not my attention been called away by the sight of an object so terrible to me and mine as Kokoo, I felt certain I should have gained. I had now to submit to the ill-humour of Goolchund, who hinted I had been bought over by the opposite party.

Hurrychund also looked very cool upon me, and was extremely dissatisfied.

On my returning home, Sagoonah inquired what, in the name of Vishnu, could have so paralyzed me; how I failed, and what was the cause of my agitation. She beseeched me to tell her what it was that struck me speechless in the court. I said, "When you are in danger, my dear Sagoonah, it is impossible I can attend to any thing besides." The frightened girl now inquired how she could be discovered in danger in the midst of my pleadings. I communicated to her the cause of my alarm, and that I had recognized Kokoo, and his companion the driver, at the window of the courtroom. I entreated her to keep within doors, and never to exhibit herself in the streets. I also begged her to explain to Hurrychund

how I had been alarmed, and the cause of it, which occasioned the loss of his nephew's suit. She promised me I should be reinstated in his favour, for she had great influence over him; and before night came, I found she had performed her promise successfully, for old Hurrychund became as affable and good-natured as before. Goolchund, however, still continued to wear a long face, which he altered a little upon my talking to him respecting his cause, repeating my regret at its failure, which could not have happened under any other circumstances than those which I related to him. I advised him by all means to appeal against the decree of the registrar; for although it was not common for the judge of the upper court to hear fresh evidence on a cause, yet, upon my representing how I had been

interrupted in my defence, it was probable he would waive the general custom, as an exception, owing to very peculiar circumstances, and grant the admission of fresh evidence. Goolchund shook me heartily by the hand, and declared he would give notice of appeal on the following day.

When Goolchund quitted me, Nanna came in, full of anxiety, to hear the cause of my failure in court. When I told him, he said he was not surprised at it, for the sight of such an inveterate foe seeking one's life, at all times appalling, must have been particularly so at such a critical moment, and was enough to bewilder the strongest and most courageous man. Nanna advised me never to go out after it was dark, or venture at any time beyond the city walls. Day after day passed away, and all was quiet:

neither Kokoo nor the driver appeared. The appeal case was heard in due course; I having furnished affidavits, stating how I had been interrupted, and that important evidence, which would have decided the cause the other way, had not been heard, the judge granted the request. I was not permitted to plead, because I belonged to the lower court; but the cause was ably conducted. After a long hearing, the decree of the court below was reversed, and Goolchund was successful, to the inexpressible chagrin of Premje and his friends. Old Hurrychund was so pleased at the issue of the appeal, that he gave a nautch * on the occasion, to which all the most respectable of his caste were invited.

* Dance.

CHAP. IV.

AT the nautch mentioned in the last chapter, an excursion to the island of Kubbeer Burr was proposed. This place is situated some way up the river Nerbudda, and is remarkable for being entirely covered by one large banyan tree. The branches of this tree growing downwards, take root, and become each of them a distinct trunk. From these other branches droop in like manner to the ground, and thus traverse over and shade from the sun an immense space of ground, nearly two thousand feet in extent. It is deliciously refreshing, during the hot weather, to walk under the green arches formed by this tree, and

enjoy the shade and coolness. Walk joins to walk, among green festoons, and a labyrinth of leaves and branches. Nothing could be more agreeable than parties made to spend the day on such a spot. The distance was but a pleasant sail, and the relaxation from business, and a due attention to the important duties of eating, drinking, talking and smoking, were anticipated by all who were to join in the excursion with no small delight. As there was but little preparation necessary, matters were speedily arranged for starting. The women were to accompany us—a measure which I opposed in vain, dreading the machinations of Kokoo, who I was convinced remained lurking in the neighbourhood, waiting a fit opportunity to consummate his nefarious plans. Sagoonah was extremely desirous of seeing

the island, and endeavoured to persuade herself there was no danger in going thither, protected as she would be by us and two or three udalut peons. Goolchund's wife and mother were to accompany us, and therefore Sagoonah was determined to venture. Finding argument of no avail, I gave up the point, and prepared for the excursion. It was fixed to take place on the third day after the appeal cause came on. Hurrychund sent every thing we could need to the island, the day preceding, and spared no expense to render the whole party as comfortable as possible. At an early hour in the morning we set out on our excursion. It happened to be an Hindoo holiday, and no business was transacted at the court-house, so I requested Nanna to accompany us, and we both went,

well armed, and, each attended by two armed peons, escorted the females to the boat. It was at the hour of five in the morning, it being necessary to go up with the tide. Owing to the darkness of the hour, which the morning mist increased, it was impossible to distinguish Sagoonah from Beema, Goolchund's wife, their figures were so much alike, and both enveloped in dark shawls. After a few hours' sail we saw the island, to the great joy of Beema and her mother, who were both ill from the boat's motion. It was agreed that those who were tired of the voyage should land at once, and ramble about the island, or enjoy themselves in the shade. On landing I was much struck with the remarkable tree, having never seen one half its size, in any part of the Deccan. There seemed to

me to be a thousand trunks, supporting an immense roof of foliage of a deep green. Not a ray of the sun could penetrate through it; all under it was in shadowy silence. The great drawback to our pleasure was that the place abounded in snakes, so that we were ever in fear of trampling upon them, and of getting bit. This would not have been the case, however, without frequent warnings, as the boatmen and servants enhanced the danger by marvellous stories of the venom of these reptiles, as proofs that it was more powerful here than in any other part of India. One of them related a tale of a person struck dead at encountering the fiery eyes of an immense serpent covered with hair, that reached in length from one side the island to another. As if to help out the marvellous narration,

a large *cobra di capello* brushed away from us among the underwood at the moment, and so alarmed the females, that we moved in another direction, taking a different path, and one more beaten. Our presence in this unfrequented place seemed to cause great consternation among the monkeys and birds, which haunted it in vast numbers, and of all varieties. The screams of the disturbed and affrighted fowls as they flew off, and the chatter and grin of the monkeys, that, peeping amid the branches of the trees, seemed mocking our power to take them, were highly amusing. Though all creatures besides seemed to flee us, the bat hung by his enormous wings in certain dark hollows of the trees and densely shaded boughs, apparently insensible of our presence. The coolness, and the additional feeling of gloom

thrown over the deeper recesses of the foliage, were far from being agreeable on this account. The bats differed much from those which visit our streets and houses in the city, being immensely large, and measuring three or four feet from wing to wing when extended. They call them in the Deccan *wur wagool*. In all my wanderings I never before saw such a sight. They hung with their heads downwards in every direction by hundreds, suspended from small hooks at the extremity of their wings. After a short ramble under this magnificent tree, we found ourselves almost close to the landing-place where our boat lay. Some of the party, while we took rice for our first repast, proposed remaining on the island, and others were for sailing a little further up the river and returning to dinner. Those

with whom the water disagreed, naturally were for keeping upon the land. Sagoonah and her aunt were so much pleased with the sail to the island, that they expressed a wish to proceed a short way up the stream, and rejoin their female friends in an hour or two. Sagoonah, her aunt, Nanna, two peons and myself, therefore embarked to take a little more pleasure on the water. The time passed so pleasantly, that we did not reflect upon the distance the wind and tide were carrying us. At length the tide turned, and the boatmen advised us to avail ourselves of its assistance, and return to the island. Unfortunately the wind was full in our teeth, and we could make no way but with the oars; our boat also was large and heavy. Not being prepared for this disappointment, and having but three sailors and

two oars, one of which afterwards snapped in using it, our progress was very slow. Sagoonah's aunt had fortunately a little dried grain and bread with her, of which we partook. Without oars, we were obliged to hoist our sail, and tack and wear, hoping to reach the island before the tide again turned: but in this we were disappointed. We made no distance, and were tossed about to no purpose. The females became ill, and our party was miserable enough. When the tide turned, we were obliged to take down our sail and anchor, to prevent being carried back again; this we did pretty near the shore, and then we consulted what was best to be done. It was now six o'clock in the evening, and we seemed without a possibility of reaching the island, where the rest of our party must be anx-

iously awaiting us—for await us they must, as there was no other boat to convey them home. I now proposed sending the two peons on shore to procure oars, and four stout fellows to row us to the island. The peons set off, while Nanna and myself guarded the females, who were alarmed, and stood much in need of rest. Hour after hour passed away, and it was ten o'clock before the peons returned, bringing with them only three oars, but no men to assist; they reported that it was with great difficulty they procured these. There being no remedy, we determined to make the best use of the oars we could, and weighing anchor, pulled with all our strength against the tide. With every effort we gained but little, till the tide again turned in our favour. This was at twelve o'clock at night.

A miserable day of pleasure we had, toiling at our oars, and Nanna vowing he would never go boating again for pleasure. At length we saw lights at the island, and the men set up a loud shout—which was answered by our friends, who were no doubt tired enough. About two o'clock we set our feet on shore, and found all wailing and lamentation. The first person we saw was old Hurrychund, beating his breast and tearing his clothes, at the same time crying, "Oh my nephew, wife, and her mother, all gone!" I demanded whither. The old man exclaimed, would to Ishwar he knew—"some villains had borne them off." He then demanded where I had been so late, exclaiming every moment, "what a day of pleasure—misery! misery!" I begged him to explain himself, but the old man

could only weep and beat his breast. One of the peons whom I had left with the party on the island, to whom I appealed for information, told me that, hour after hour passing by, and not seeing any thing of us, they went in parties round different points of the island, to see if they could espy us coming. About six in the evening Hurrychund's nephew, with his niece and her mother, being absent, he bade him go in quest of them. He did so, and on arriving at the end of the island, was just in time to see a boat push off well manned, and to hear the screams of the females on board. The boat went against the tide to Broach, but owing to the number of hands on board, it moved away rapidly. He returned immediately to Hurrychund, and told him what he had seen. The old man was struck dumb.

with terror and alarm. Pursuit was impossible, for there was no boat, and they became more anxious than ever for our arrival. Hour after hour passed, till it was too late to pursue them, if there were hands and oars to overtake them. Nanna during the recital declared his belief that Sagoonah, her aunt, and myself, were the persons whom the villains intended to seize; but that, it being dark, they had not been able to distinguish the one from the other. I fully coincided with Nanna in opinion, and rejoiced at our escape, though I sincerely bewailed the fate of our friends. Hurrychund ordered the boat to return to Broach, as the tide would soon again become adverse, and not a moment should be lost. Having embarked, we rowed, fatigued as we were, and reached the city by five o'clock

in the morning, having had twenty-four hours of every thing but pleasure. Application was immediately made to the police to pursue the villains who had carried off Hurrychund's relatives. Parties were despatched by land and water, to endeavour to obtain tidings of them. Leaving Nanna to watch over Sagoonah and her aunt, I embarked with a strong party to scour the river, entertaining but a faint hope of success. Well knowing the sanguinary disposition of Kokoo (who I felt certain was the agent in the affair), I feared that, finding he had missed his prey, it would instigate him to commit violence on the unhappy persons who had fallen into his clutches. We made inquiry of every boat which came up the stream, if the people had seen an open boat well manned, or had heard the screams of

women proceeding from any vessel on the river. We were uniformly answered in the negative, and began to despair of obtaining any tidings of Goolchund and his wife. At length we found ourselves opposite a bungalow, or house, built by an English gentleman, who resorted there when sickness rendered a change of air useful, the sea breeze being very sensibly felt at that place. We could not return to Broach until the tide changed, and I determined to go on shore and wait its turn at the bungalow. We accordingly anchored; but no sooner was the anchor dropped, than we were hailed from the bungalow by a voice which I recognized to be Goolchund's. We immediately landed, and joined him at the front of the house, expressing our pleasure at meeting him once more. He bade me come

in, and he would tell me all that had happened to them. I eagerly inquired if his wife and her mother were safe : and he answered me by throwing open the door of a room, where I saw them quietly seated on the floor, eating dried grain. They were much pleased at seeing me, and begged me to sit down by them.

Goolchund now proceeded to relate the circumstances of their capture. They had gone round the island to see if they could find us, or rather to look out for us returning down the river, when they were suddenly seized by a number of men, who bore them to a boat, and put off from the shore. The thing was so sudden, that they were all astounded; and it was some time before they could recover themselves. The men rowed with all their force for

some miles, until they were past Broach; having taken the precaution to gag the women, and thus prevent their screaming while passing the city walls. A small boat now met them, from which a shrill whistle was heard, and answered by those who were in the boat with us. The little boat then ran alongside our's, and two men came on board us, having a lantern. One of them was a short man, with light hair; the other taller, having a dark complexion. As the light flashed across the boat, I could distinctly perceive our late opponent in the law-courts Premje, who instantly ordered the light to be put out, and began a very earnest conversation with the short man, who had just entered the boat. Goolchund was seriously alarmed, to find himself thus in the power of an enemy, of whose resent-

ment it was impossible to foresee the extent. At length they reached the bungalow, and cast anchor opposite to it: they were then landed, and compelled to walk up the bank to the house, in a room of which they were locked. The villains who had taken them off prepared to sleep in the hall; their prisoners also lay down; but could obtain no repose, for Goolchund heard one of their guards say, “Do? why, kill the fellow, to be sure! Did he not try to subject me to the most cruel and lingering death—even to starvation?”—“Impossible!” said another voice, which was Premje’s; “he has never been away from Guzerat in his life.”—“Aye, aye! but I know better,” replied the first speaker; “he shall be food for fishes, on our way to Bombay.” Goolchund here made a violent

knocking at the door, and two men entered the room in which they were confined; one of them was Premje, and the other a shorter person. They inquired the cause of the uproar. Goolchund informed the short man he had heard their conversation, and was anxious to convince him of his error. He desired him to look in his face with the lantern close, and say if he had ever seen him till then. He did so, and in a moment exclaimed, "Death and fury! have we had all this trouble for nothing? What fellow have we here?" Goolchund then told him his name, and he said, "You will soon, perhaps, be set at liberty;—but, though disappointed in my man, the women are in my power." Goolchund assured him that one of them was his wife, and the other her mother, entire strangers to him.

Upon this the short man called out, "Rajoo! get up, you lazy rascal! and come hither instantly!" Upon this the taller man of the two, who had come on board us from the little boat, came in, rubbing his eyes. The short man whispered something to him, and then bade him approach the females, and say if the young one was not Sagoonah. Goolchund then saw through the whole affair, and comprehended the mistake which had been committed; and that Sagoonah, her aunt, and myself, were the persons they intended to carry off. The man who had been sleeping approached the females, and, after a minute inspection, cried out, "Alas we have caught the wrong birds!" The short man's rage knew no bounds; taking Premje by the collar, he dashed him with violence

against the wall, and hurried out of the bungalow, summoning together his men ; and, going on board, they weighed anchor, and, were far away before the morning dawned. It was clear Premje was the agent in this affair, he having a grudge against Goolchund ; and, conceiving him and his wife the persons wanted, he was, doubtless, active enough in his exertions to effect the object in view. Though sorely bruised, he fled from the house, and was not seen there afterwards, nor was it likely he would venture to enter Broach again.

I then explained to Goolchund who the short man was, and that his face had prevented my succeeding in court in gaining his cause : that I had no doubt of his object being myself ; and that, had he succeeded, I should have been food for fishes,

too certainly. Goolchund thought I had had a narrow escape, and then bade me explain the cause of our absence from the island, which I did in every particular.

The whole party now embarked in my boat, and one tide carried us back to Broach. We reached the city about six o'clock in the evening. Crowds of persons were in waiting to receive us. The whole city had heard of the outrage committed, and every one was anxious to know where the missing persons had been discovered, and who took them away from the island. I had previously advised Goolchund not to say a word about Premje being concerned, until we had communicated with old Hurrychund; we therefore reported to the multitude, that we were ignorant of the persons, and motives for committing the outrage upon us.

This only increased the public curiosity, and many false reports were circulated respecting the affair; at length the people, by some accident, hit upon the truth, or so much of it as established, that as Premje had been an opponent of Goolchund's in court, and the latter having gained the cause, the former had hired persons to carry off and murder his antagonist and wife. Premje's disappearance from the city at the time, caused this statement to be believed. The Marwarry caste crowded around Goolchund, and desired him to swear by the holy cow whether or not Premje was in the plot. Goolchund acknowledged that he had seen Premje in the party which carried himself and his wife away from the island. The Marwarrys, upon this, combined and surrounded Premje's house, which they

would have razed to the ground, had not a strong body of police been sent to protect it from their rage. It now became necessary that Goolchund should proceed to the police court and formally depose against Premje; this he did, whilst I escorted home the females, and hastened to relieve the anxious mind of old Hurrychund. Thus terminated our pleasure-party to the island of Kubbeer Burr.

CHAP. V.

IN human life, one misery is certain to be followed by a train of half a dozen. The discomfiture of our excursion to the island was followed by the illness of old Hurrychund, who had been too long exposed to the night air for one of his advanced years. He caught from the damps a severe fever, which in three days carried him off. A funeral, instead of a wedding, was now ordered to be prepared in booths in the front of his house. The sudden demise of the old man was a sad blow to us all. I had myself been fanciful enough to suppose he would recover from the attack ; but, on the third day after it took place, on returning

from the court, I saw the kind and emaciated old man stretched on the fatal bed of *cusa* * grass, and I was convinced no hope of his recovery remained. The old man was, in fact, death-struck, and had no more time allowed him than was sufficient to make a few donations to his surviving friends and relatives. Among the former was Sagoonah's aunt, to whom he bequeathed five hundred rupees.

None of the sacred water of the Ganges being at hand, the ceremony of sprinkling his head was omitted from necessity, but the *sála gràma* † stone was placed near him,

* When the death of a Hindoo is certain, and no hope remains, he is laid on a bed of grass, called *cusa*.

† A small black smooth stone, perforated by worms, or, as the Hindoos believe, by Vishnu, in the shape of a reptile.

and all the ceremonies performed which the friendship of his relations could prompt and had the means of executing. Holy strains were chaunted, and sacred hymns poured into the ear of the dying; leaves of hallowed trees were scattered over his head, and every attention religiously paid him in his expiring moments. As soon as he was dead, the body was washed, perfumed, and decked with flowers; a ruby put into his mouth, together with coral, and small pieces of gold thrust into his nostrils and eyes. Goolchund, the nearest relative, as usual, brought the cloth sprinkled with fragrant oil, and threw it over the corpse: two hours afterwards they conveyed the body to the funeral pile; it was raised up by his relatives, and placed on a wooden bier for the procession. It now moved slowly on, with

fire and food borne before it in an unbaked earthen vessel, accompanied by the sound of drums, cymbals, and wind and stringed instruments. The funeral passed out through the eastern gate of the city to its place of destination. The corpse being laid upon a bed of cusa, with its head towards the south, the relatives of the deceased bathed in the river on the banks of which the funeral pile was to be prepared. They then began to mark out lines, upon which the wood was placed. The pile being ready, they washed the body, clothed it in clean linen, rubbing it with perfumes, and then placed it on the wood with the head to the north. Goolchund then threw the cloth over the corpse; and taking up a lighted brand, invoked all the holy places, saying, "May the gods, with mouths of fire, consume this body!"

He then walked three times round the pile, looked towards the south, and, dropping on his left knee, applied a torch to the wood near the head of the corpse, while the attendant priests recited the proper prayers. During the time the wood was consuming, several of the relations of the deceased having taken seven pieces of the wood, walked slowly round the pile and threw them over their shoulders upon the fire, saying, "All hail to thee who consumeth flesh !" All who had followed or touched the body were obliged to walk round the pile, keeping their left hands towards it, but not looking at the fire. They then proceeded to the river, bathed, and returned home in procession, having performed many minor ceremonies, such as sipping water, &c., too minute to mention. On arriving at the house of the

deceased, the funeral cakes were baked, and food put aside on a leaf for the crows. Cake was thrown into water, and milk and water were suspended at the door of the house in earthen vessels every evening, until the time of mourning expired. This endured for ten days, and mournful days they were to us all.

Sagoonah and her aunt lived with Beema; and Anundee her mother; but as the latter intended to go to Surat, it was necessary to make some new arrangements: at length, Nanna procured lodgings for Sagoonah and her aunt in a very retired quarter of the city, and Beema and her mother took leave of us, and proceeded to Surat, leaving us melancholy enough at their departure. The uncertainty we were in respecting Kokoo was a great drawback upon our comfort.

Sagoonah, knowing the imperious necessity for concealment, resigned herself to the alternative of close imprisonment in her lodgings, with a placidity which more than ever incensed me against her persecutors, and raised her still higher in my esteem. Business had become scarce at the court, and I consulted Nanna as to whether we had not better proceed elsewhere, to some other court where the Mahratta language was used, whereby we should gain many advantages that Guzerat did not afford us. Nanna being of my opinion, I informed Sagoonah that we intended to proceed to the Northern Concan, in hopes of obtaining practice as pleaders in that court. Neither Sagoonah nor her aunt were particularly desirous of remaining in Broach, and they both acquiesced immediately in

our plans for the future. Whether we should proceed by sea or by land was the next point; and we finally fixed upon the latter mode, hoping we should not be molested by Kokoo or his agents. I informed the judge of the reasons which induced me to quit his court: he approved of my plans, and gave me a letter to the judge of the Concan, in which he also recommended Nanna. Just as we were taking leave, the nazir came running in, reporting that a prisoner had escaped who was employed in working upon the roads; he had knocked down the guard and disencumbered himself of his irons. The judge inquired the name of the man; and, to my surprise, I found it was Fuzl Khan. "Where did this fellow come from?" inquired the judge. "He came with these two Mahrattas," was the

reply of the nazir, pointing to us.—“ Indeed!” observed the judge; “ and these two are just going away, and their friend is departed. It appears very suspicious. I fear you have aided the fellow in breaking prison.” We were much hurt at such a suspicion, though we could hardly wonder at its being entertained. We most earnestly assured the judge we cared nothing about the fellow, and had taken no interest in his affairs. The judge said, there was certainly no proof of our conniving at or assisting in his escape, and he would not detain us. He advised us not to be seen in the fellow’s company again on the English territory. We bowed, and retired. On the outside of the court we saw the guard whom Fuzl Khan had knocked down. The poor fellow’s teeth were literally driven down his

throat. Fuzl had used his irons as the weapon of offence. Nanna observed, that he was a desperate man, and I agreed that he was more so than I had apprehended; but I said I thought he must be speedily retaken. Nanna imagined he was too clever a fellow for that; but we both agreed never more to have any thing to do with him if he came in our way.

Every thing being in order, we set out on our journey. Sagoonah and her aunt were seated in a small covered cart drawn by bullocks; Nanna and myself were mounted upon tattoos. We started at an early hour in the morning, that we might reach Surat at night, resting an hour or two at Khim to refresh our cattle. From the latter place, where we enjoyed a comfortable meal, we set forth again for Surat. The bullocks

being knocked up, our journey was delayed so much that darkness came on before we arrived near Surat. We had passed two travellers on the road on foot, who now overtook us, so slow did we proceed. These two men seemed very suspicious characters; if we stopped they did the same, and sometimes they kept up with us by running. Nanna was convinced they were not common travellers, but had some sinister motive for thus following us. We watched them narrowly; but as they did not offer to molest us in any way, we took no other notice of them, and soon entering Surat, we hoped to lose sight of them entirely. In this, however, we found ourselves mistaken; for while we were assisting the women to alight from the carriage at a comfortable lodging which Nanna had procured, the two travel-

lers posted themselves one on each side of the door, and having seen us enter, hastened away down the street. "Who can these fellows be?" inquired Sagoonah. "They once opened the cloth which covered the carriage, and peeped in." I swore, by Ishwar, had I known this before, I would have prevented their ever attempting it a second time. I requested her not to be alarmed, as we should keep a good look-out. I endeavoured to persuade her they would probably cease to follow us any further, as Surat might be the place of their destination. Notwithstanding all I said, Sagoonah was evidently alarmed. Nanna and myself agreed to keep guard by turns outside her chamber, and to strike down any one who might attempt to enter or to molest us.

After we had dined, Nanna went out to

hire fresh cattle for the ensuing day; and, on his return, the females retired to their apartment. Nanna took post at their door for the first half of the night. At one o'clock he awoke me, saying all was quiet: I took his place, and remained there until morning; but nothing occurred to disturb us. The cattle were ready; and, having taken breakfast, we once more set out, unattended by any prying travellers, so that I began to hope we had rid ourselves of them entirely. Nousarry was the first stage, and there we thought of remaining all night, the females complaining of fatigue. What was my surprise, on alighting, to find the two mysterious travellers posted there! and before I could demand the reason of their thus molesting us, they were off. This conduct was now a subject of serious alarm to us all,

and I determined, should they follow us to Damaun, to take some measures for eluding them. We also thought it prudent to travel only by short stages in the day, so as not to run the risk of being benighted. In this manner we proceeded, and were sure to behold the travellers posted at the durhmallah where we alighted. At length we reached Damaun, a large fortified place belonging to the Portuguese. As before, the two men were watching our arrival there. On seeing this, I thought it high time to consult on some method of eluding their watchfulness, and therefore determined on taking a boat and proceeding by sea the rest of the distance. We could never have a better opportunity than at Damaun, for it was a sea-port, and boats of all sorts were riding in the harbour. The travellers

conceiving we should still proceed by land, would set out before us, as they had hitherto invariably done, and would be at a loss when they missed us at the following stage. This plan was agreed to. Nanna went and hired a boat as secretly as possible, and early in the morning we went on board and set sail. The boat we had hired was called a pattamar: it was a large one, and had a cabin for the females. On the third day we saw Bassein, the chief place in the Northern Concan, whither I determined on going. A better boat than ours for sailing came after us, as we supposed from Surat, and hailing us, asked whither we were bound? I desired the tindal, or steersman, to answer, "Bombay." The strange boat now ran so close to us, that I could recognize the faces of all on board; and what was my vexation in dis-

covering the two men who had before followed us, muffled up in dark shawls! It thus seemed impossible to avoid them. Nanna proposed shooting them; but, aware of the consequences of such a proceeding on the territory of the English, I begged him not to think a moment of such a step. The strange boat now passed us, and I desired the tindal to put into Bassein, which he had no sooner done, than I had the mortification to see the strange boat put about, and run for the same port. “We must submit,” I observed; “let the fellows follow us if they will; we must be prepared for them, and what more can be done?”

We landed at Bassein, procured lodgings, and, as early as convenient, I presented my letter to the English gentleman

there; who, on perusing its contents, advised me to proceed to Thannah; the court was held there, and he was going to that place in a very short time, and would then do all in his power for me. In consequence of this we left Bassein, and reached Thannah by water, seeing nothing of the two men, who I hoped had departed. At Thannah we waited until the judge arrived, when I made my salaam to him; and he promised me a vakeelship as soon as a vacancy occurred, which he daily expected. It happened, unfortunately, that an old inhabitant of Thannah was candidate for the place also; and, in consequence, I was regarded with an evil eye; and I even heard that some plan was on foot to ruin my expectations. One day the judge sent for me, and said, "So you wish to be a pleader,

do you?" I replied in the affirmative. "Why," said he, "you must be the most impudent fellow in the world! I understand you were once a common peon in Bombay, engaged in a dreadful conspiracy to murder the treasurer, and was, in consequence, expelled from the island!" I denied it stoutly, and said it was all a base fabrication of my enemies, and the man who was a candidate for the pleader's place. "Well," said the judge, "we will see; call in the man who says he will swear to this would-be vakeel." A man now came forward, whom I knew to be one of the mysterious travellers; he was wrapped up in his coarse black shawl. On approaching the judge, he uncovered himself and made a salaam, which afforded me an opportunity of seeing his face. The features

were familiar to me, but I could not call to mind where I had seen them, or on what occasion. The judge asking his name, he replied it was Gumbia. This was enough to enable me to remember that he was the very man expelled from Bombay with myself, and who left me to return thither, and search for my treasure. I now felt that my hopes of the place here were frustrated. The fellow deposed to a thousand falsehoods; swore he himself was in the plot, and was expelled Bombay at the same time that I was, and for the same crime. The judge said, he also conceived it his duty to send me from Thannah, and desired me to go in two days' time, or he should be forced to compel me to do so. This was a fatal blow; but what was to be done but to obey? I returned home, and

as I entered the house, the traveller Gumbia overtook me ; and, giving me a fiendish grin, hurried away. I did not relate to Nanna or to the females the reason of my failure ; but informed them the judge had preferred another man, and it was desirable we should all proceed to the Deccan once more.

After my failure, I had some conversation with Sagoonah, relative to my hopes respecting herself. I told her, on our arrival in the Deccan, I was determined to discover whether the boy to whom she had been betrothed was living or not. If I could satisfactorily prove this, I demanded whether she would longer refuse me the right of affording her legal protection. She put her hand into mine, saying, “ But prove he is no more, and this hand is

your's." I then told her we must proceed to Satarah, for there only could any thing be learned that was satisfactory upon this subject, so important to us both. "What!" cried Sagoonah, "to Satarah? to my rich uncle, who will take me from your protection?"—"Not so," I said; "he must not be acquainted of your being there."—"He will—he will know!" replied Sagoonah; "I must not even accompany you to the Deccan. My aunt and I will proceed to Bombay, and await tidings of you there." I could not but acknowledge the good sense of this arrangement. To prevent their being followed to Bombay, Nanna hit upon a most ingenious scheme, by which the two spies, cunning as they were, must be infallibly deceived. His plan was to procure two other women for hire, and get

them into the house over-night. In the morning these women, muffled up, were to accompany us across the river to the Mahratta country. The travelling-spies would follow us as usual, imagining the women to be the same who accompanied us from Guzerat. Sagoonah and her aunt might then set off for Bombay, where they might provide themselves lodgings; for it would occasion suspicion, were he or I to go there for that purpose, and return again. We all thought this an admirable plan, and agreed to adopt it without delay. Nanna procured two women, as like Sagoonah and her aunt in figure as possible, and got them sily into the house. They willingly engaged in our service, when we imparted to them the business for which they were wanted, and accepted our terms; but they could not help

expressing their wonder at the reason of our taking them to Satarah with us, merely to send them back again. We promised to explain the why and wherefore at some future time; and we kept them shut up for the night, so that they might not guess there were any other females than themselves in the house. Nanna proceeded to the bazaar, and openly demanded bullocks and tattoos for the following morning. On returning, he informed me that one of the spies was at the kotwall's office when he gave orders for the beasts; and that we might rely upon it, they would be near us on our march next day.

This was the last night of my being happy in the presence of Sagoonah—for all I knew, it might be the last time of my life! The next day we were to be separated from

each other ; and who knew but it was for ever ! We neither of us closed our eyes until the hour of parting came. I agreed to let her hear from me by a messenger, so as not to trust to letter-communication ; and the more, as she could not read, and must get that done for her, which might put others in possession of our secrets. She desired me to send the messenger to Sunkersette Baboolsette, the great goldsmith at Bombay, and inquire for her under the name of Beema Bhae, and the messenger would receive proper directions where to find her. I thought this method the best that, under the circumstances, could be devised, as I could thus, at any time, be certain of her being concealed, and yet communicate any thing I wished to her. Not liking that we should be seen taking leave

of each other, we parted at daybreak, with heavy hearts. I there threw myself for a few minutes on a mat, endeavouring to compose myself, before Nanna called me to set out upon our journey.

CHAP. VI.

NANNA soon came to me, and bade me get ready to start. We set off on foot, with the two women muffled up; and, crossing the river, found bullocks and tattoos in readiness, on the opposite banks. The drivers led us through passes, over hills and rugged places; till, after a fatiguing journey, we reached Campowley—a small village at the foot of the Ghauts. The heat here being intolerable, we determined to set off again as early as possible the following morning. The spies had not made their appearance during the whole of the preceding day. This gave us considerable alarm, fearing our plot might have been

discovered, and the women were still watched by the villanous agents of our foes. I began to fancy Sagoonah and her aunt pursued by them to Bombay, or, what was even more to be feared, prevented from reaching that place. Our fears on this head were, fortunately, groundless; for, in the morning, when we arrived on the summit of the Ghauts, we saw the two spies in conversation together. Turning round, and seeing us approach, they walked forwards at a rapid rate. We congratulated ourselves on the success of our plot, and cautioned the two women, should we pass the men who had gone forward, to muffle themselves up carefully, and with evident fear and perturbation. They promised obedience; and, having baited our cattle, and taken some refreshment ourselves at Candala (a village

on the summit of the Ghauts), we once more journeyed onwards. The fresh breeze from the Deccan was most exhilarating after the heat of the lower land, and both Nanna and myself were charmed at once more setting foot in our own country. Before we reached the next stage we passed the two travellers, who were sitting under a tree eating dried grain. The women, as they had promised to do, muffled themselves up in apparent haste; and we saw the men cast very significant glances at each other as we went by. I now imagined Gumbia's companion to be the mischievous ass-driver, as, from his height and figure, he very much resembled him.

We reached Poona on the following day, and the two spies were, as usual, posted at the door where we alighted. The women

entered the house, well muffled up, and then the two scoundrels went their way. On my way to Satarah I had no occasion to visit Poona; but I thought it prudent to ascertain, in the best way I was able, the state of affairs at Satarah before I went thither. I found that the rajah was still very ill, and that the pretender, Gunput Rao, though he was acknowledged by the English, was opposed by another man, who declared himself to be his elder brother, but who had not yet appeared publicly in that character. His name alone, it was reported at Poona, had enlisted many persons on his side; and that, in consequence, Gunput Rao had been raising soldiers to crush the elder brother, as a pretender. The latter had assembled a valiant body of troops to support his own cause; but the

two parties were not likely to come to blows until the decease of the present rajah. The name of the claimant to the Satarah musnud, by right of his seniority, was Sevaje; and the people guessed he was concealed somewhere near Satarah. I was advised, if I went to that place, to be as silent as possible in regard to political affairs, as there were many bloodthirsty villains abroad, who found means to get rid of all who spoke adverse to the party they supported, whenever opportunity was favourable for it. I pretended every where at Poona the utmost indifference as to the different claimants to the musnud. I stated to those of whom I made inquiry, that I was going to Satarah merely to seek employment, and that I should enter into the service of neither of the parties striving for

the mastery. Nanna advised me not to proceed to Satarah, because Kokoo was no doubt there, with Gunput Rao; and his disappointment again respecting the women would cause him to seek me out more perseveringly, and to sacrifice me to his vengeance. This advice was worth regarding; and, having made Nanna fully acquainted (as his conduct warranted me in doing) with the circumstances of Sagoonah, I begged him to go to Satarah, and make every inquiry possible respecting the youth to whom she had been betrothed. I agreed to remain in Poona, and await his return.

The foregoing plan being fixed upon, Nanna prepared to set out. He proposed that we should start together; and when the two spies were some way on the road before us, I should suddenly return to

Poona with one of the women. Nanna, when he overtook the travellers, was to cry aloud to them for protection, declaring a gang of rogues had forcibly taken away his companion and one of the females. The woman with Nanna was to play her part, by crying, tearing her hair, and other symptoms of grief. By this means there could be no doubt but the spies would be deceived; the travellers would not think of returning to Poona, but would imagine the pretended ruffians were some of their own gang, employed by Gabbage or Kokoo. If that should be the case, they would most likely proceed to Satarah at once; and should they seize the woman, it was time enough then for them to find out their mistake, and let her go again. The plan appeared to me useful for confusing the two

emissaries; and we all left Poona the following day, concluding the travellers, as usual, were on before us. At the part of the road agreed upon, I turned back with the youngest woman to Poona. Unfortunately, this day the spies were behind us instead of being in front, as we made sure they were. After travelling a few coss back, we met them face to face. The woman muffled up, and so did I; but they recognized us, and stood and looked after us for some time. The separation seemed to confuse them, and they appeared to hesitate which party they should follow—Nanna's or mine. I left them, however, in apparent uncertainty; for both the woman and myself being mounted on tattoos, we flogged the animals, and set off in good speed to Poona—the beasts quickening

their pace, as they knew it was their road home. By this means we left the travellers a good distance behind us in a few minutes after we had started. On arriving at Poona, I dismissed the woman, after paying her the stipulated reward. She was a stranger to her companion who had gone forward to Satarah; and I was careful to recommend her immediate return to Thannah, in order to prevent any intelligence being obtained from her respecting myself, if she remained in Poona, where I designed to sojourn for a short time. The woman took my rupees gratefully, and we parted.

The first step I took was to change my appearance as much as possible. I got shaved, and disguised myself as well as I could, and then sought a very retired lodging. In the house in which I fixed myself

lived a hanger-on at the court of the English collector. This collector was an officer of the army, collector, and judge at the same time. A desire from my past experience and knowledge of the law at Broach, led me to examine into the state of its administration at Poona upon finding I possessed such an opportunity, and having, moreover, little or nothing else to occupy my time. My fellow-lodger, like many others, gained a livelihood by knavery and chicanery in the arbitration suits; he held his nocturnal meetings, and met his arbitration-gangs at all hours of the night. His name was Loochajee, and he managed to be concerned in almost every cause. His intentions, in this respect, were admirably seconded by the prevailing system of administering justice by arbitration. He con-

trived to enrich himself by plundering both plaintiffs and defendants. I will endeavour to give my readers an account of the system of punchayet or arbitration, said to be far superior to the system of justice enforced in Guzerat, which I have elsewhere explained: it will then be easy to judge which of the two systems is best adapted to afford real and substantial justice. At Poona there was no regular judge, as in the courts of Guzerat;—a collector of the revenue, with two assistants, was expected to do every thing. In the administration of justice he obtained the assistance of a punchayet, consisting of five arbitrators—a plan said to be highly approved of by the natives, it being their own customary mode of settling disputes; but, if a better mode were pointed out, it does not seem to me that they would

despise it. Trials by punchayet flourished most during the power of the great Poona minister, Nanna Furnavese; when no files of undecided suits were ever heard of. The difference between that time and more recent ones was, that then three-fourths of the declarations of suits were never allowed to be put on the file—a very simple method of keeping it clear. Under the English, almost every plaint was admitted, and referred to arbitration; the consequence of this being, that a sufficient number of persons to sit on arbitrations could not be found; and those who did sit had no pay, either from the litigating parties or from the government. A few respectable merchants and others had no objection to sit now and then upon a punchayet; but it could not be expected that such would sit

every day in the year, and leave their own concerns entirely to settle the business of others gratis. Even supposing they were paid for their services, the fee would most likely fall short of the profits arising from their own exertions in their daily avocations. A marked man, or having the reputation of ability, would be constantly called upon. The punchayet consists of two persons named by the plaintiff, and two by the defendant, the government nominating the fifth or umpire. The latter I never could discover to be of much use: he was designed to see fair play, and prevent delay; but, in the event of two arbitrators being for the plaintiff and two for the defendant, the case could only be settled by the umpire, who was always expected to decide it one way or another. If he allowed

an award that was unjust, he was called to account for it: if he reversed or interfered with the opinions of the two arbitrators, either for plaintiff or defendant, he was severely censured for so doing; his office was thus completely neutralized. At length no respectable natives would sit as arbitrators; and the court was, in consequence, haunted by fellows like my fellow-lodger, Loochajee—men who could write and read, and were respectable, as far as external appearance went, but in reality were depraved and unprincipled. By such men came, at last, to be decided the claims of the inhabitants of Poona for justice! The method by which they turn their trade to account is, by first securing a large retaining fee from the disputants who nominate them, and then they contrive to follow up

the first fee by numerous others; so that the richest man is almost sure to win his cause. Oftentimes the arbitrators are all in league, and divide whatever comes to the net in equal portions:—in this case they apply themselves to *sumjao* the defendant. In Poona this word has several meanings; such as, to buy a person over, to talk over, or to persuade; but it is meant also to threaten an individual, and in that sense it is generally used by the arbitrators when in combination. The different arbitrators come to the defendant, and state that they have determined he shall pay to the plaintiff a certain sum of money: he objects, and they tell him he had better comply, and say before the umpire that he is satisfied; for if he does not, they will fix the sum to be paid at double the amount, and then he must

pay, or go to a gaol by their decree. This is denominated the *sumjaoing system*; and the poor defendant has the option of paying a comparatively small sum of money by his own free-will and consent, or of agreeing to be ruined by a decree of the court. The arbitrators having been well feed on both sides before they read a paper in the cause, put on their lawyer-like looks, and lead the unlucky defendant before the umpire in the court-room. The foreman of the party presents the decree, and the umpire asks if the party is satisfied. The poor devil, knowing the power of the arbitrators, joins his hands, and answers, “Ho, m,ha,raj,”—yes, my lord. He is then ordered to pay the money forthwith, and the arbitrators, like my fellow-lodger, retire to hunt down fresh game. Should

these men be at any time detected in their malpractices, it is a matter of indifference to them, as they have no character to lose; and should they be marked out and never employed again, they think themselves lucky in having made what they have contrived to secure.

Another class of persons, who I found turn a penny by the sale of justice, are the hangers-on of some inferior offices of the courts, who just cook up cases, and then make the disputants believe that, through their interest, their cause will be admitted without delay. The Mahrattas, well aware of the difficulty that existed under their old government of getting heard, think that the same difficulties exist under the new, which is contrary to the fact. An agent sat daily to receive petitions, not one of

which was presented without a gratuity being paid to some hanger-on in the court, who had pretended to the petitioner he either will or has spoken to the officer of justice in his favour, and that he may advance and lay his document safely on the table, and rely it will be received and attended to in consequence of their interference. In Guzerat, where the government receives all fees for admitting suits according to the amount sued for, every one knows what he has to pay on filing his suit; and, at all events, feels confident it will be attended to in turn. Notwithstanding all the pretended advantages of the arbitration system, the files of causes were soon found swelling to a prodigious size; for, though there were two or three gangs of arbitrators appointed, they were so dilatory

that business accumulated faster than they despatched them. But, though little was effected in the way of despatch, these judges were ever ready to take a fresh fee or a new cause. Thus, my fellow-lodger had twenty cases on hand at once, on all of which he had taken care to pocket the money. Should he be detected, he well knew he was safe on the credit side of the account, while his clients would have to fee his successor, and be duped twice over. At length a gentleman was appointed to the office who saw into the devices of this class of men: they determined, however, to get rid of him at all hazards. They collected together charges against him that were groundless in themselves, but which they offered to substantiate; and he was recalled, for their benefit and his own ruin.

A military individual was placed at the head of the civil department at Poona; another of the same profession at Satarah, Ahmednugur, and Kandeish: these were selected for their knowledge of the Mahrattas and their language. Yet this could hardly be true; for I heard of far better scholars in the two Concans, who could write a Mahratta letter and read an answer in that tongue; whereas not one of these military Englishmen in the Deccan could understand the contents of a letter unless it were read to him by an attendant clerk! In consequence, the latter might read whatever he pleased to make the contents of the document in his hand to be. In the Concan, gentlemen not of the military profession conducted all their business in the Mahratta tongue; while those of the Deccan trans-

acted theirs in bad Hindustanee, so as not to be comprehensible to either Deccan Brahmin or Deccan Coombie. The former were therefore infinitely better fitted for the purpose of judges than the latter, and it seemed to me bad policy in the government not to see this. As to the punchayet system, it will not do, if the English wish to distribute justice to the inhabitants, and do not wish to discourage applications for redress, and thus force the people to settle their own differences among themselves. I found those civil-military men so eager to call in arbitrators, that they proceeded to try criminal as well as civil cases by them. The folly of this, however, became too apparent to be long allowed, and the government issued its orders to discontinue the trial of criminals by this method.

CHAP. VII.

AFTER remaining in Poona some weeks, and hearing nothing from Nanna, I became very anxious respecting the future, and finally determined to set off for Satarah myself. I was convinced something very unexpected had occurred to prevent my receiving tidings from that quarter. Delay, too, was prejudicial to my future views; and therefore, muffling myself up one dark evening, and taking my sword and dagger, I left Poona, travelled all night for better concealment, and in the morning crept into a shed, eating only bread and dried grain. I left my hiding-place at night, and again proceeded onwards, thus effectually conceal-

ing my movements. On the morning of the third day I reached Satarah, where I found every thing quiet. One evening I went into a temple to make pùja to the god; I staid a much longer time there than was customary, because I imagined I might hear something interesting respecting public affairs from the people who repaired thither. In this expectation I was disappointed, as I heard nothing that could be of the least service to me. The bell tolled before I prepared to leave the consecrated spot, and the small lamp burning before the image expiring, all was darkness. I groped my way towards the threshold, and had just crossed it when the sound of voices struck my ear. It was evident the persons speaking intended to enter the temple, not to make pùja to the god, but to discuss some

secret transaction. As I imagined their conversation might relate to politics, I became anxious to gain some information ; and having just sufficient time to do so unobserved, I re-entered the temple and concealed myself in a corner. The two persons entered, and seated themselves in the centre of the building. One of them began by exclaiming, “ So you are just as clever a fellow as your companion ; you have been all this time at Poona, and have not found out that Pandurang Hàrì ! ” — “ What could I do ? ” replied the other fellow, whom I knew to be Gumbia ; “ he eluded me, as I before explained to you. ” — “ Shame on you, ” observed the first speaker, whom I knew to be Kokoo, “ to dog them all the way from Guzerat, and then to lose sight of them within two days’ march of Satarah !

Then, again, your sagacious companion the bullock-driver, to bring us a woman no one ever saw or heard of before—an old hag, that it would be common charity to drown! Sagoonah is no doubt in Poona, and that devil Pandoo is with her. You say you met them returning thither and pursued them, and that your companion pursued the other man and woman, whom nobody knows or cares about. However, I shall take good care of the man, and will not release him until he gives me information whereby I may secure his friend and Sagoonah.”—“We shall get them yet,” said Gambia; “there is plenty of time yet to—” —“Dolt, idiot!” cried Kokoo, “there is not a moment to be lost. Who knows but the rajah may die to-morrow? and has not Sagoonah’s uncle declared he will not

advance a rupee to Gunput Rao until the latter shall produce his niece and she is married to Mahadeo? This Sevaje is also supposed to be in Satarah, ready to produce his claims to the throne: how then is there time to spare? Now what stupid wretches have you two been!"—"Not so fast," cried Gumbia; "did you never miss catching the birds yourself at Broach?"—"Yes," said Kokoo, "because I depended on that sneaking villain, Premje: would I had knocked out his brains!"—"Perhaps you have," observed Gumbia.—"I fear not," said Kokoo: "have you any tidings respecting Sevaje, or his place of concealment?"—"None," was the reply. "That is the old answer," said Kokoo; "done nothing and know nothing, and still expect to be paid! I see it is useless to trust such scoundrels as

you are. Gunput Rao must be independent of the rich banker, and strike a blow with the means he already has in his possession.”—“He will fail then,” said Gumbia.—“Scoundrel! say that again,” retorted Kokoo, “and it shall be your death. He shall not fail: though we wade through rivers of blood, either he or his son shall sit on the Satarah musnud.”—“But Sevaje has a party also,” said Gumbia.—“He has,” replied Kokoo, “and they march to-morrow night for a strong hold to the southward, and will be cut to pieces on the way:—do you know the fortress where they now are?”—“Yes,” replied Gumbia, “on the high hill, eight coss from hence.”—“Well, then,” observed Kokoo, “they quit that place, and must pass through deep ravines. Our troops will meet them hemmed in there,

and annihilate the presumptuous followers of the unwary Sevaje. Hasten you to Hossein, my brave Mahomedan lieutenant, and bid him prepare and meet me on the open plain at noon to-morrow." The two villains then left the temple.

I determined, as soon as I could, to proceed to the hill-fortress, and apprize the garrison of the designs of Kokoo. I left my hiding-place much grieved at finding Nanna had fallen into the hands of our enemies. It was more than probable Gabbage would again see him, and, remembering his former conduct towards him, complete that which it was not his fault was not finished when he stabbed him in the cave. I should have been most happy to overhear the place of his confinement; but Kokoo did not mention it, and it was impossible for me to

make the discovery without some cue. I felt sure Nanna would never betray me or Sagoonah. I could only hope that chance might conduct me to the place where he was detained, and that I might, by some means or other, be enabled to effect his liberation. I was not at an equal loss to know where the troops of Sevaje were posted, and I accordingly hastened to the hills, on the summit of the highest of which stood a strong fortified tower. I ascended the rugged path that led to the gates of the fort. On arriving at them I knocked for admittance, and an old man thrust out his head from a loophole over the door, and inquired who disturbed his slumbers?—"Slumbers!" I answered, "who would expect to find any one asleep within these walls? If this be the case, awaken the garri-

son, and let me have an audience of the commandant.”—“That thou hast already,” said the old man, “and for one very good reason—I am the only person it contains.”—“What!” I cried, “are not the troops within?”—“No, I tell you,” said the old fellow; “they left me in the dead of night.”—“Then all is safe,” I exclaimed; “I came to apprize them of their danger on their march through the ravines.”—“They must then, by this time, have met with it or avoided it,” observed the old man: “but who are you that appear to be so vastly knowing, and unaccountably kind to our troops?”—“Hush!” I replied, in a whisper; “this is no place for politics. If you will admit me into the fort——”—“Stay a minute,” cried the wary old fellow; “you do not take me for such an ass, do you? Get you gone

from hence instantly, or you shall have a matchlock-bullet or a Bheel's arrow after you!—Ho! begone.” So saying, he pointed the muzzle of a matchlock through a loophole towards me, which caused me to use no little expedition in getting away. I made the trusty old guard a salaam when I got at random-shot distance, and soon reached the plain.

Whether the troops had left the fortress or not, I could not presume to decide. It was probable the guardian there had misinformed me on purpose, conceiving me a spy in the employ of Gunput Rao. Knowing Kokoo was in Satarah, and seeing little chance of obtaining intelligence respecting the youth to whom Sagoonah had been betrothed, I determined upon taking advantage of the present moment to

proceed to Indore, in hopes of once more falling in with the goatherd of the glen, or of gaining some intelligence respecting him from his friend Shewdhut Wanee, to whom he had before referred me. It was the current report that Sevaje (whom I had strong reason for believing to be my old friend the goatherd) was concealed at Satarah. This, however, was but report, and there was no chance of my arriving at a certainty upon the subject, without proceeding to Indore and making the needful inquiry, and learning, if he really were at Satarah, how I was to discover him. I had no time to lose, and therefore I travelled as fast as I could towards the city, for I had no money to hire tattoos; and, after a six days' laborious march, I entered Indore. I had expended my last rupee; and, hungry and wretchedly

fatigued, I presented myself before Shewdhut Waneè. A thousand times I regretted having fallen in with the Bheels, and being plundered of the silver ring given me by the goatherd. I felt that the friends of the old man were obliged to be exceedingly cautious respecting their knowledge of him, circumstanced as he must be; and that, without some undeniable proof of my acquaintance with him, I should not be trusted even by Shewdhut. Upon my requesting an audience of Shewdhut, a lean meagre form lifted up his head from his account-books, and said, "I am Shewdhut Waneè, brother; what do you want?" I replied I came in search of an old man, for whom I had a sincere regard; who bade me, should I wish to communicate with him, apply there. "Old man!—apply to

me!" cried Shewdhut; "why, I don't keep old men!"—"You are right," said I, "to be cautious; but, rely upon it, I am no deceiver; for this old man gave me a ring (which I described to Shewdhut), and said that, upon shewing it, you would conduct me to him." Upon my saying this, he shut his book, and, looking me very closely in the face, beckoned me to follow him into the interior of his dwelling. I obeyed, and Wanee, upon our being seated, held out his hand for the ring, which he bade me produce. I was now compelled to relate by what unforeseen accident I had been deprived of this valuable token of my identity. I ended by expressing my hopes that my description of the old man, and of the ring he had given me, would be a sufficient

proof to him that I was no deceiver, but a sincere friend, who panted to serve the recluse with all my heart. The Wanee would not refuse me his confidence, but he gave it me very warily and cautiously. He said he recollected the recluse had mentioned to him something about a young man whom he was anxious to see; but that, it being a long time ago, he had quite forgotten what he said. "You must know, young man," continued Shewdhut, "that the person you seek is not in Indore." I told him I expected as much; but I asked if he was not at Satarah? Wanee said he was, and he was about to join him there; and if I would go also, he would be my guide. This was singularly fortunate for me, and I expressed my readiness to attend him thither imme-

diately. He proposed to leave Indore in two days, and I promised to be punctual in my attendance upon him for that purpose.

Before I arose to depart I begged Wanees to inform me whether the relations of Sawunt Rao, my old benefactor, were still in Indore. "They are," said he; "but how dost thou know these people?"—"I knew Sawunt Rao," said I, "and served in his army."—"Indeed!" observed Wanees, "and what is your name?" I replied, "Pandurang Hàrì." He then asked if I was Sawunt's adopted son, and if he left me any money when he died. I answered according to the facts, adding, that I must except a kurdoorah chain, found on me when I was a child. Wanees then inquired where the chain was, and I told him it remained with the relatives of Sawunt. "It

must be !” said Wanee to himself, musing as if about some mystery. “ Young man, you must possess yourself of this chain, and take it with you to Satarah. Ask me no questions. But stay—it may not be ! yet it is strange—an embossed chain, say you ?” I nodded in the affirmative, very naturally wondering at the same time to what all the mystery tended. He then bade me describe the clasp : I replied it had a snake’s head, with two rubies for eyes. “ It is what I thought !” said Wanee ; “ we must be off to-morrow, my young friend. He who first bound that chain round your loins pants to behold you.” I asked who that was, with some eagerness. Wanee answered, “ He whom you seek, the recluse of the glen—your father !”—“ The recluse, the old goat-herd, my father ?” I exclaimed : “ O good

Wanee, bring me to him; let me clasp him to my heart! Have I, indeed, found a parent? Say, is it Sevaje?"—"Silence! let not that name pass your lips. Walls have ears," said Wanee, "and whispers are often carried upon the air: silence alone is security. It is the same whom you knew—the goat-herd, the recluse; and ere long he will welcome you as a king and a father!"—"Then Ishwar be praised!" I rejoined, "and nerve my arm to crush all his enemies. Has my father given up every hope of finding me?" I inquired. "He has long since despaired of doing so," said Wanee: "often has he conversed with me upon the fatal events which tore you from him; and has frequently alluded to the embossed chain, which he himself fastened around your waist on the dreadful night of your separation."

I then demanded if Wanee had all along been the friend of my unfortunate parent; he answered in the affirmative, and that he saved my father's life; but bade me seek to know no more at that moment. "Yes," I cried, "I must hear more. Did my father mention a girl who was betrothed to me?" Wanee replied that he did. I eagerly demanded "if he knew her name."—"This," said Wanee, "I never heard him mention. But from him you shall yourself learn more, if, indeed, as you appear, you are in reality his son. Let us hasten to regain your chain, and then push on to Satarah, where your father now sojourns."—"Thanks," I cried, "my best friend! and may the great Dum reward you for all your goodness!"

We set out accordingly for the house of Sawunt Rao's widow, and being introduced

into her apartment, I made myself known to her. She arose immediately, and welcomed me with much sincerity. After I had made inquiries respecting the health of her family as well as her own, I asked her respectfully for the silver chain left me by her husband. She desired us to seat ourselves, and withdrew, saying, she had not forgotten her promise to take care of it for me. In a few minutes she returned with it in her hand. Shewdhut examined the silver kur-doorah minutely, and declared openly his opinion it was the identical chain he had so often heard spoken of before. He desired the widow to tell him what her husband said when he presented me with the chain. The widow replied, that he said he bequeathed the chain to me, because it had been found on my person when a child, and

he had preserved it in the hope it might lead to a discovery of my parents. Shewd-hut observed that he was now convinced all his surmises were correct respecting me. The widow expressed her hope I should soon discover my friends, and was curious to learn whether I had already found any cue to my parents. Wanee said he hoped we had, but that it would be wrong to be too sanguine, and that she should in due time be made acquainted with the result of our inquiries.

Wanee now requested me to return with him to his dwelling to sleep that night, saying he had a comfortable apartment for the accommodation of his friends. Sleep, as it may naturally be supposed, was a stranger to my eyes; and I lay all night restless and haunted with reflections on the strange dis-

closures which that day had brought to light by means of Shewdhut Wanee. I could not believe it possible that I, a poor houseless wanderer, could be the lawful successor to a musnud; that in a short time I should clasp a father to my heart, when I had been so many years a desolate outcast: this was a happiness which I never could have conjectured to be in store for me! I moreover reflected that it was probable I was the being to whom Sagoonah had been betrothed; for though Wanee did not recollect the name of the girl, I felt almost convinced it could be no other. This idea was the source of infinite delight. Was it a delusion? It might be, but it was much more probably a reality, than my being the son of Sevaje, and a prince. When I reflected upon my affinity to Gab-

bage, I shuddered at his crimes, and thought how little I imagined, when listening to Mahadeo's tale in the Pindaree fort, that the relater was my cousin, who had sworn to persecute me. These reflections kept me awake during the whole night; and, as soon as it was morning, I went to the door of Shewdhut's room. Not hearing him stir, I called out, and was answered by his wife, of whom I demanded whether her husband was ready. She replied, he had been gone out an hour before. "Gone," said I, "and not called me? Impossible!"—"He went to the temple," replied the woman, alarmed, "to make pùja, intending to return and summon you to attend him on his journey to Satarah." I inquired how long it was since he left his chamber; and she answered, "A full hour." I ran immediately

to the temple. The morning was clear and beautiful; and with breathless haste I entered the edifice—but I could find no Shewdhut there, and I was leaving the place in despair, when, to my surprise and horror, I discovered spots of blood upon the pavement. Some one, it immediately struck me, had murdered him, and carried off his body.—How was I doomed to bitter disappointment! The motive which led to such an act could not be plunder, it was evident; for at such a time it was not likely Wanee would have had money about his person. I searched every where around the temple without effect. The traces of blood disappeared at the entrance of the building, so that on the exterior there was no mark or track to direct the pursuit. I hastened back to Shewdhut's wife; and, with tears in my

eyes, related what I had seen, and my fears of the worst having happened. I bade her hope, however, that it might not be the blood of her husband, and that he might still return. She began immediately to beat her breast and tear her hair, screaming in so frantic a manner at the same time, that her neighbours rushed in from all quarters to demand the cause of her loud lamentations. “Oh! my husband, my husband!” were the only words she could utter; while I informed the by-standers of the event which we had too much reason to fear must have happened, requesting some of them to accompany me, and try if we could get any further tidings of Wanee, who, if alive, it was reasonable to surmise could not be very far distant. All bewailed the fate of their late neighbour, but not one volunteered to

accompany me in search of the lost man—so very careful was each individual present of his own security.

Disgusted at such conduct, and impatient of delay, I sallied forth again from the house with my sword in my hand, and once more entered the temple. I saw no one there, and then I proceeded to search a small grove at the back of the building. The grass was trodden down apparently by several footsteps; thence I tracked feet to the open plain, where I entirely lost the marks. I continued my search until evening unsuccessfully, and I then returned to the distressed wife of Shewdhut, disconsolate and unhappy. I found the poor woman stretched on her bed, almost exhausted by weeping and sorrow. I feared to disturb her; as, by having nothing comforting to

communicate, I should but add to her sorrow. I sat down on the threshold of the door, meditating on Shewdhut's disappearance, and thinking that my hopes of beholding my father were now almost annihilated. Still I determined to proceed to Satarah, and spare no labour, when there, to find out Sevaje's present concealment. Having the kurdoorah in my possession, I could not fail of being acknowledged by him as his son, if I really were so, although the presence of Shewdhut would have facilitated the means, and hastened the time of investigation. Fastening my turban under my chin, and putting on my shoes, I was leaving the street in which the house of Shewdhut was situated, when, to my astonishment, I was surrounded by a crowd of Wanee's friends, who made me their prisoner, calling me

Shewdhut's murderer. It was in vain that I endeavoured to convince them of their mistake : they hurried me to the police-office, where, the whole affair having been investigated, I was fortunately released. I call myself fortunate, because, on being charged with such a crime by a mob, I did not get more ill usage, and was suffered to depart. I did not go in peace notwithstanding, although the kotwall released me ; for the people still maintained their first opinion of my being, directly or indirectly, concerned in Shewdhut's murder ; and I was hooted, hissed, and pelted out of the city, as if I had been the greatest criminal that had ever been within its walls.

CHAP. VIII.

I BEING once clear of the people and in the open fields, to which I had run until my breath began to fail me, I was surrounded by night, which had begun to close in before I was clear of the city. I still however, continued my journey towards Satarah, until I was overcome with weariness and fatigue. I threw myself down under a tree, and sank, almost worn out, into a sound slumber. I was awoke by the loud snorting of an elephant, which, with his driver upon his neck, was proceeding along the road. As I was rousing myself, the mahouhut called out, "Hollo, brother! what—asleep in the jungles at this

time of the year!" I replied, travellers wearied by long marching had no choice left, and the shelter of a tree must, in such cases, be put up with. "Whither art thou going?" asked the driver. I told him to Satarah. "Well, that is fortunate," rejoined the mahouhut, "for I am bound there also, and will give you a ride upon the elephant." I thanked him, and tapping his animal on the head, he cried, "kneel down." The huge creature obeyed, and I clambered up his side, and when seated, the animal arose with us at command. It was the first time I had ever rode upon one of these sagacious beasts. The elephant was sometimes troublesome, in which case the mahouhut thrust his goad into the hole of a wound behind the animal's ear, which he said he never suffered to heal, and it in-

stantly had the good sense to become submissive. The mahouhut observed, that he had another sore place which he probed when he wanted the animal to quicken his pace, and another when he wanted to make him scream, or utter a salaam in praise of his lord and master. I inquired his master's name, and he informed me it was Holkar's dewan, or prime-minister, adding, "and a good master he is, for we all act as we like, and fill our bellies by doing the people to the extent of our fancies." Thus the mahouhut scarcely ever ceased chattering about one thing and another every minute of the journey, except when he called out to his elephant, *Chul, chul*, or "walk on quick," accompanying the word of command with a kick behind the creature's ear. The beast went along

snorting and puffing at a brisk rate, and the driver would begin to talk to me again. I inquired what news there was at Indore. "Oh, nothing particular," replied the fellow; "an old wanee,* they say, has been murdered (chul, chul, Baba!), and it is supposed a stranger, who lodged in his house, is the guilty person; but our kotwall could see no ground for the charge, and released the stranger, who was no doubt very glad to get off. For my part, if he really did kill the old grain-seller, I think he did a good act; there are too many of these miserly old rascals in Indore, and the grain is so dear a poor man must almost starve." I remarked, I did not think that was his case; for he appeared in excellent condition. "Me? no, no, old *Futteh*

* Or shopkeeper.

*gudje** here gives me half his flour and ghee daily, and he must be fed, let grain be at what price it may. You know it would little redound to my credit to mount my lord on a lean brute." I observed that what he said was true, nor would it redound to his lord's credit to be driven by a lean mahouhut. "Exactly thus," replied the driver, "and thus Futteh and myself are, you observe, in excellent condition, not among the spare creation."

This mahouhut was a merry good-natured fellow, and at any other time I should have entered into, and enjoyed his jokes; but now, recent events, and my anxiety for the future—the idea of finding a father, or of being crossed by some mischance in my en-

* Epithet applied to the elephant, meaning "victorious."

deavours to penetrate to his retreat, pressed upon my mind. I could not long continue to feign an enjoyment of the fellow's wit, and to put on a jocularitv that must sit but very awkwardly upon me. The driver soon perceived I was not his match in spirits, and that I often relapsed into silence and thoughtfulness. He would then console himself with a song, stopping frequently in the midst of his ditty to cry out to his elephant, "Chul, chul, Baba!" The last halt we made, before reaching our destination, was at a small village, where the driver purposed to dine, together with his beast. He being a Mahomedan, I could not dine with him : but he said he would give me some raw rice, if I would accompany him to the grain-shops in the small bazaar. Having fastened the elephant's hind leg by a chain

to a tree, and put a rope round his fore legs, we entered into the bazaar. To observe the airs the fellow put on, he might have been taken for the dewan himself, instead of his mahouhut. He twisted his mustachios, and cocked his turban on one side, folding his arms a-kimbo before a grain-shop, where, in the midst of a few half-filled baskets of grain, sat cross-legged a starved meagre Marwarry, the owner of the shop. "Ho ! you skin and bone Marwarry," cried the driver, "up with you, and supply my lord the dewan's elephant with rice, ghee, flour and *jagree*.* Be quick I say, or, by Allah, I will shew you how my elephant serves those who will not feed him."—" *Arry deo, hoi, hoi*,"† cried the grain merchant ; " I have no rice, no ghee,

* Coarse sugar.

† An exclamation.

no flour, no jagree. Your beast would eat up all in the village.” — “ Silence, you rascal,” cried the mahouhut, “ or I will report you on my return.” — “ Indeed,” said the poor devil, “ you must go to the potail ; I have no supply of what you demand. Good driver, don’t distress me ; go,” added he, in a low whisper, “ to the shop of Laldass in the next street—his granaries are full of every thing you want.” — “ Well, well,” answered the mahouhut, “ if he has not any I shall return to you.” We then went on to Laldass ; but he having probably heard of the great devourer that was come into the village, and knowing that if he parted with his grain he would never be paid for it, had carefully shut up his shop. In a violent rage, the mahouhut returned to the Marwarry ; but he, taking advantage of our

absence, had done the same thing before we could return to him, and most carefully secured the avenues that led to his rice and flour, in the midst of which he had no doubt taken up his quarters. The mahouhut then went to the potail, saying, "Here I am—do you choose to feed us?"—"What can I do?" replied the poor fellow, "I cannot make grain."—"Very well, my friend," said the driver, "you know the consequences!" The potail shrugged up his shoulders, and said he was helpless, for the grain-dealers had shut up their shops. "Then, by Allah," said the mahouhut, "they shall soon be opened." Having said this, he went to the place where he had left his beast tied up, and roaring for his food. Loosening his chain and ropes, he scrambled upon his neck and rode him up to the shop of Lal-

dass, which was merely the verandah of a house, closed up with a number of narrow planks which served for shutters. The elephant stood close with its enormous head touching the shutters, and his rider called out, "Ho ! within there—I want rice."—" *Chawul nu,hue,*"* cried a voice from within. "Bring flour then," said the mahouhut. " *Attah nu,hue,*"† was the reply. "Ghee then."—" *Toop nu,hue,*"‡ answered the shopkeeper with a hearty laugh, as if it was a good joke. "Give me jagree then," said the driver.—" *Gor nu,hue,*"§ responded the shopkeeper. "I will see if you tell truth then," answered the mahouhut; and placing his heels behind the ears of the elephant, and goading him in one of the sore places

* No rice.

† No flour.

‡ No ghee.

§ No sugar.

he had before mentioned, he exclaimed, “*Tor dallo Baba, zoor se.*”^{*} The cunning animal, as if it knew the flour was behind the shutters, butted at them with full force, and crash they went to pieces in an instant, and discovered Laldass in the midst of plenty, tumbling affrighted over his baskets of grain.—“Oh, mercy! mercy!” he cried: “here is flour, ghee, rice and sugar, good mahouhut—take what you want.”—“Rascal,” cried the driver, “I have a great mind to make the elephant squeeze the breath out of your miserable body, for giving me so much trouble. Come, fill my sacks, or I will not spare you.” The women of Laldass now came forward, and filled the bags with every thing he wanted, for which they did not get a single rupee in

^{*} “Break it to pieces, old fellow, with all your might.”

return. The bags being placed on the elephant's back, the animal walked majestically away, the mahouhut saying to the poor devil of a grain-dealer, "Perhaps I shall not report you on my return to Indore, provided you have a second supply ready for me as I come back. Don't give me this trouble again." The family bowed in silence. We now sought the potail, who had provided wood for us, and some sugar-canes for the elephant to eat while the bread was baking; and we once more secured the animal, and left him to munch them, while we attended to our own cookery. "Did you ever see such rascals?" said the elephant-driver. "They would no more mind seeing me and my elephant starve, than you would mind seeing them hanged."—"Not they," I replied; "but it is well we are not

out of Holkar's dominions; for, were we in those of the English, we should, I fear, be made to repent our feat."—"Perhaps we should," answered the fellow; "but as the case stands, we have nothing to do with the Toope Wallas, and I heartily wish they were driven out of India."—"We must fight harder than we have yet done to accomplish this," I rejoined; "but were it not for the bad management of your master and the other Rajahs and rulers, these foreigners would never have done what they have. Holkar, Badjerao, and Scindea, are always ready for war—and when it begins they run away from it. This is the way the Toope Wallas have got so firm a hold among us, and we shall, I fear, never live to see the end of it."—"What you say may be very true," answered my companion, "but

hang me if I know any thing about the matter; but I do know that, as long as I drive an elephant, he shall not starve, come what may." We pursued this discourse no further; and as soon as the elephant had devoured his bread, rice, and sugar, we continued our journey. Nothing more occurred until we perceived the hill on which the seven-towered fort of Satarah * stands. I then deemed it prudent to alight; and, thanking the mahouhut for his kindness, I walked, well muffled up, into the city.

In the streets I saw groupings of ill-looking fellows conversing, and their appearance convinced me there was something of importance about to take place. In one part two men passed me at a quick pace; one

* Called Satarah, or Sath-Istara, or the Seven Stars, or Pleiades, from its seven towers.

of whom I felt certain was Gabbage Gousla. They were out of sight in a moment; but, from their hurried manner, I had a conviction that mischief could not be far off;—perhaps some plot was on the eve of explosion, as my intelligence respecting the state of affairs gave me good reason to surmise would be the case. Having no money and little food, I determined to fast until the next day; and I rambled about until I reached a durhm sallah, which was, very fortunately, unoccupied. Here I took my silver kurdoorah, and secured it about my person. It was too small to go round my waist, but I wound it twice round my arm, getting the snakes' heads to meet, with some difficulty, and fixing them by the small screw attached to the ornament. I had scarcely done this before I heard voices

approaching; and presently some men entered, carrying spears and matchlocks. Seeing me sitting unemployed, they cried, “Ho, brother!—do you want a job? if so, come with us, and load yourself with some of these weapons.” I inquired whither they were going;—they told me where pay was to be had. I asked who were their employers; and they said they were persons who would either be kings or beggars; but upon my questioning them further, they told me that was neither here nor there, but bid me jump up and assist them, for it was no time to be idle. I desired them first to tell me whom I was to serve; and one of them cursed me, and said, “Shoot him! he is one of Gunput’s spies!”—“Hold!” I cried; “I am not inclined that side the question, any how.” The men then bade me come along;—

I piled several matchlocks on my shoulders, and followed them through ravines and over hills, until we came to a very considerable cavern. Here one of them gave a loud whistle, which was answered by one more shrill, and of longer continuance, from within. Not a word was spoken by my guides, until a light gleamed from a recess of the cave : one of the men then said, taking my wrist, "Come on, but utter not a word." The bearer of the light now approached us ; and, seeing me, asked me who I was. One of my companions answered that the load was too heavy for them, and they had therefore hired me. Some whispering then took place between the men who arrived with me and the person who bore the torch, which ended in the latter addressing me nearly to this effect :—"Stranger, you are

at liberty to return from whence you came, or to enter the cavern. If you choose to go away, here is your hire; if you prefer to remain with us, you must not depart until certain circumstances dissolve our band; in which, provided you will enlist, we shall be happy to accept your services: but you must not flinch from the cause you have embraced; you must bind yourself by a solemn oath to be faithful to our cause, and to promote our objects even to death.” I begged him to admit me, and to state to me the nature of the service in which they proposed I should embark. I said I was fearful lest I should enter a den inhabited by Gunput Rao and his party, in whose cause I would not engage; but if I did so, and found after all that I was admitted of a party I could not support,—how could I

retract? To suppose no worse, after what I had said, the cavern must be my prison until the present disputes were settled. I said I had no objection, should an opportunity be afforded me of so doing, to take a conspicuous part in fighting for the unfortunate Sevaje, whom I had every reason to suppose I was bound in honour to serve; but to fall into the hands of his opponent would, indeed, be a dreadful thing for me. The torch-bearer, seeming to feel my embarrassment, desired me not to act in too great a haste. "No deceit is ever practised here," said he; "the troops of Sevaje fight in open and honourable warfare, for no guile is suffered in his name; and it is the same in all other matters in which his followers engage." The name of Sevaje and these statements (which I was conscious

no agent of Gabbage would use or make), determined me how to act. I made a motion to the torch-bearer to lead me on, and delivered to him my sword, as a sign I submitted to an engagement on his side of the question. He then led me, with the other men, over several rugged places, until we came to a wide stream that flowed subterraneously through the cave: across this a door presented itself, studded with iron spikes of enormous dimensions. On a signal being given from without, the door was gradually lowered, until it formed a bridge across the stream. We passed over, and entered a spacious place—so much so, indeed, it seemed as if the whole hill had been excavated to form the apartment. In this excavation there sat twelve men, partly in armour, and before them were provisions of

all kinds. A hum of numerous voices was heard, proceeding from different passages on the right and left hand of the hollow or great chamber, which I immediately conjectured to be Sevaje's strong-hold. Who knew but he might himself be there, or one of the twelve men before me? I was so intent in regarding their features, and so occupied with my thoughts, that I did not hear one of them address me, until I was pulled by the sleeve by the torch-bearer, who stood at my side. Having satisfied my own mind Sevaje was not among them, I craved pardon for my abstraction; and one of them repeated his question, demanding my name. I determined to use no deceit, lest, on being discovered, I should not be trusted in their affairs; I therefore replied, "My name is Pandurang Hàrì." Several

voices spoke at once :—" Is it possible !" cried they. " Am I known, then," I responded, " by any of this gallant band ?"— " Your name," said the first speaker, " is familiar to us ;—you have enemies, but your lucky star has led you here. We have certain information of persons lying in wait for you at Poona, where, it is reported, you have concealed a girl, named Sagoonah. Not being acquainted with your person, we deemed it fruitless the attempting to find you out, and warn you of your danger and of the secret attacks of your enemies. But how did you come from Poona hither, and escape the assassins that lurked about for you ?" I informed them in return, that I came not from Poona, but from Indore. They inquired if I came alone : I said an unhappy man, who I feared was no more, was to

have accompanied me. They asked his name, and I told them Shewdhut Wanee. “By Ishwar! the very man,” cried the chief of the party! But say, how know you he is no more? How were you acquainted with him?” I told him my life had been one unfortunate scene of disappointments and hardships; that I had been hunted through the world by an unrelenting enemy, who had sworn to take my life. I had fled to Guzerat from the Deccan—but I was allowed no rest: my enemies followed me closely, and dogged me back to my own country. I had been tricked by knaves, robbed by Bheels, and pursued by assassins!—that, it so happened, as I was flying from the latter, I fell in with an old man, a goatherd, in a glen near Asseerghur, whose life I by chance discovered was in jeopardy.

I made this circumstance known to him—we conversed together, and were mutually pleased. I thought his resignation and manners, and his hidden misfortunes, most touching: I swore to serve him, should it be ever in my power to do so. He told me he should quit the glen, and proceed to Indore, where lived a Wanee, named Shewdhut, who, on my producing to him a silver ring which he left with me, would conduct me to the place of his retreat. Circumstances afterwards made it necessary for me to visit the goatherd, from whom I conceived it possible I might learn something regarding an unfortunate and persecuted girl already named: that I went to Indore for this purpose; had an interview with Shewdhut, whom I convinced I was no impostor; and he, at length, told me that the

goatherd was not at Indore, but at Satarah, whither he was himself proceeding. I then mentioned the disappearance of Shewdhut Wanee, and the reasons I had for believing him to be murdered.

The chief of the party heard me conclude my story, with melancholy in his countenance at the fate of Shewdhut. The whole twelve now whispered to each other in so low a tone, I could not catch a single syllable of what they said. The chief at length begged me to retire for a short time, but to await their call. The torch-bearer arose, and, opening a little side-door, desired me to follow him. I then entered a small square chamber, covered with mats, on which he bade me be seated, and left me to reflect on my singular adventure. In about an hour I was summoned again into the

presence of the council—the chief of which desired me to be seated in front of him. I obeyed, and he then commenced by stating, that they had resolved to ask me a few questions more, which I might or might not answer, as I saw fit; but that, in answering them, there was every probability of benefiting myself. Moreover, having heard my answers, they could better determine how far to entrust me with the secrets connected with their cause, and the object they had in view. I bowed assent, and they proceeded:—“Have you any reason to believe that the goatherd you mentioned is any other than a private individual?” I answered, “I have every reason to believe him to be Sevaje, the lawful successor to the musnud of Satarah.” They then bade me state my reasons; and, fearing to hint

at the chance of my being his son, lest it should not be so after all, and I should be esteemed presumptuous, I answered, “that Shewdhut had dropped some pretty strong hints to me, and some expressions had escaped him, from which I gathered that such was the case—indeed, I felt certain of it.” They then inquired who Sagoonah was. I replied, “a girl betrothed to a young man who has never been heard of.”—“How came she under your protection?” I answered, “She is not under my protection; she lives with her aunt. I am acquainted with them, and wished to marry the girl; but the uncertainty as to the fate of her betrothed husband prevents our union.” They then inquired where I first knew her; and I told them how I had rescued her from the hands of murderers, and had aided

in concealing her from them to this day. They next questioned me if I knew any of the murderers; and I told them that one was named Gabbage Gousla, who was also an enemy of mine. “Indeed!” cried the chieftain. “Know you aught of this Gabbage?” I replied, “Yes; that he was Gunput Rao, the pretender to the musnud of Satarah.”—“Has he a lawful right?” inquired one of the twelve. “None,” I answered; “he is a villain and a murderer!”—“How can you speak so positively?” questioned the chief. I replied, “Because I heard his history from the mouth of his own son, Mahadeo.”—“This is very strange!” exclaimed several of the council at once. “It is so,” I remarked; “for, at the time I heard the son say this, he had no idea he ever should meet his father

again, or be in any condition to aspire to the throne—he was then a roving Pindaree.”

After this I was desired to withdraw again to my seat in the small chamber: I remained there another hour, when I was again summoned. “Young man,” said the chief, “knowing so much of the history of Sevaje and Gunput Rao as you do—whose cause will you espouse?” I replied, that of Sevaje; and that I would serve him honestly and faithfully with all my heart; that he should have no more devoted adherent—no stauncher supporter. “You see, then,” he added, “men before you now who will die for Sevaje;—if you are sincere, will you enrol your name among ours, and take the oath we shall prescribe?” I answered that I would. Upon this a naked sword was

presented to me, and I was desired to repeat the following words:—"I swear by the holy cow, by fire and by water, to aid and assist Sevaje Owdhut in his attempt to reign in Satarah ! I devote my heart and body to his cause, and I will oppose and contend, even to death, with his enemies, on water or land; that neither cold nor heat shall deter me from pursuing them, nor mountains nor rivers be obstacles to turn me aside from this my purpose; that neither rewards nor threats shall bias me to the cause of the traitor Gunput Rao, or his son Mahadeo; but that the last drop of blood in my veins shall be to Sevaje ! And I bind myself also to obey his officers, and aid and assist them in battle and council, should my services be so needed; and if I fail, or act contrary to this advice, may Ishwar judge

me !” I then touched the sword, and was allowed to retire.

No great while after this, the chief, or he who seemed to lead the council, came to me, seated himself by my side, and entered at once into conversation. Among other things, he told me he thought I must be curious to know how my name became so well known to them ; but that the fact was, their spies had overheard a man named Kokoo, a chief of Gunput Rao’s force, propose my assassination. From the conversation of this man and of others, it was evident I was considered a person of some consequence, whom it was very desirable to remove out of the way ; hence the surprise of the council at hearing my name. I observed that Kokoo had an enmity to me from a private cause, and wholly indepen-

dent of his zeal for the cause of his employer. I then narrated my adventure at the cavern. The conversation finished by my receiving the offer of the command of fifty men, who were trained to the duty of both horse and foot soldiers, that they might act as circumstances should require. I accepted the command with gratitude, and requested his name, that I might acknowledge his commands as my superior. His name, he said, was Naroba Taitia, a jagheerdar, who had been deprived of his estates unjustly by the present rajah of Satarah. Seeing no chance of obtaining justice by supporting Gunput Rao, he had linked himself with the other side, and would stand or fall with it, as he could rely on Sevaje's justice.

I now ventured to inquire a little how

our public affairs stood, and what were our resources. I found the troops were more numerous than the money at hand would maintain; and that the death of Shewdhut was a loss in this respect, as he had always supplied Sevaje with cash. How Gunput Rao could discover this was a mystery; but there seemed little doubt he had been murdered by Gunput's agency. The chief of the council left me soon after this, hoping I should attend them on the morrow. In the mean time, I had an opportunity of observing every thing that was going on in the cavern, and that there were nearly three hundred men scattered about, all cheerful, confident, and to appearance very well appointed. I found that an equal number were assembled at another strong hold a few miles off, and that as Gunput Rao was

known to have no more than four hundred followers, we hoped to profit by our superiority in numbers, as well as in valour. I inquired where Sevaje then was, and found he was in Satarah, though Gunput Rao believed him in one of his strong holds. I found orders come from him daily, and that a despatch was then hourly expected from him. He had very fortunately a sincere friend at the court, who held the office of dewan, and daily informed him of every proceeding known there. By this means Sevaje was aware of Gunput's intentions, as the reigning rajah was no stranger to any of them, and befriended Gunput.

The next morning, on the assembling of the council, a shrill whistle was heard from without. All were eager to learn what orders the messenger had brought. The

drawbridge being lowered, an hircarrah appeared, and taking off his turban, produced a sealed roll. The chief of the council took it, and reading the contents, first dismissing the messenger from the chamber, he told us that if ever we struck a decisive blow, now was our moment. It appeared that Gunput Rao had for some time been petitioning the rajah to restore him his estate, which had been long ago sequestered upon his disappearance. Not content with doing this, he had also successfully claimed his brother's, on pretence of his having been murdered. Moreover, on giving, or promising to give to the minister of the rajah, an enormous sum of money, he had obtained an order on the treasury for the arrears of both estates, as annually collected from the time of their sequestration.

This money was to be issued to him the next day, at the hour of five in the evening, and he would no doubt convey it immediately to his strong hold, and thereby raise an overwhelming force, which it would be madness in Sevaje to resist. The latter, therefore wished, as the despatch stated, that the band assembled in the cavern should march against a fortified village, which was named, on one of Gunput's estates, and destroy it while the troops at Sevaje's other hold should lie in ambuscade for the treasure of Gunput on the road from Satarah. If these two attacks succeeded, the followers of the party attacked would be paralyzed, and a favourable reaction be thereby produced in favour of Sevaje. The chieftain concluded by requesting us all to arm. This was received

with cheering, and the cavern rung with the animated shouts. The despatches further stated, that Canooje, who commanded at Sevaje's other fort, would be with us on the morrow to arrange the plan of attack. Orders were then given to afford him the most rapid access, and the council broke up. All now prepared for the events of the next day; the arms were put in order, the ammunition examined, and every heart seemed elate with the prospect of being actively employed—some perhaps with the hope of plunder as well as of glory.

CHAP. IX.

BEFORE the day broke I was awoke by a centinel, who called me to attend the council, for Canooje had arrived. I hurried to the great chamber, and was introduced to this chief, with whose courageous and lofty presence I was much struck. His deportment was noble, his air military, and his countenance elevated and pleasing. I found that the determination to place Sevaje upon the Satarah musnud had originally proceeded from him, and that it was by his interest and efforts all the principal jagheerdars of whom the council consisted, had joined to aid in the cause. It was now settled, that at four o'clock in the afternoon

we should storm the fortified village belonging to Gunput Rao, whilst Canooje's division was placed in ambuscade among the ravines, within five miles of Satarah, through which the treasure of Gunput Rao must pass; and, having made themselves masters of it, bring it to the strong hold as the nearest place of safety. Our division was ordered to despatch intelligence to Canooje, while he remained in ambush, of the result of our attack on the village; at the same time, if we failed we were to remain, and blockade the place to prevent the garrison having a communication with the detachment that escorted the treasure. Thus the corps that formed the escort could not be increased in strength, and the chance of the discomfiture of our design was more remote.

The plan of attack being thus finally arranged, Canooje left us to return to his troops. When I found that the whole of our strength in the cavern was ordered to march on the village, I suggested the prudence of leaving a party behind to protect it. I observed, that the enemy would hardly omit to attack it in our absence, for we should not have marched far before Gunput Rao's spies would convey to him intelligence that the cavern had been vacated, and that on our return we should run the chance of seeing it occupied by the enemy, which would be an effectual damper to our successes elsewhere. This suggestion was properly weighed, and ordered to be carried into effect by a majority of voices. Fifty men were left with a jummahdar for this purpose. If we arrived before the vil-

lage at the hour of four, we should probably prevent the garrison from sending out a reinforcement to support the treasure party. In case the party had marched, we could then attack it in the open plain on our advance towards the village, or leave a party for this purpose concealed in its line of march : we determined therefore to move forwards directly. All became bustle and preparation. I collected my men ; saw that they were properly armed and accoutred ; that their swords, shields, daggers, and matchlocks were in order, and that they were well supplied with ammunition, scaling-ladders, and ropes, for we had no cannon to breach the village walls. When we mustered and marched away, I was much pleased to see the regularity and sobriety of our brave comrades, many of whom had

been soldiers under the fallen Peeshwa Badjerao, and were happy to be employed on the present occasion, when their pay was punctual, and they were well supplied with the needful munitions. Those on the side of Gunput Rao were men of the same order, but not headed by officers as experienced or respectable as ours; but by desperadoes like Kokoo, who looked to future reward and aggrandizement from him whom they supported; but were themselves among the unprincipled and dishonourable. Upon our arrival at a deep hollow, we halted and concealed ourselves in it, sending out scouts to watch the motions of the inhabitants and garrison of the village against which our operations were directed, and which was only distant from us about two miles. Our spies soon returned, and informed us that

one hundred men had left the village, and taken the road to Satarah, which passed by the place where we lay concealed. We observed them approaching, and, with a jummahdar and about a hundred men, I rushed from our ambush upon the unprepared soldiers of Gunput. Though taken completely by surprise, they recovered and ranged themselves in fighting array, keeping up so constant a fire from their matchlocks, that we could not attack them sword in hand as we intended. Their commander, however, having made them fire a volley, thinking to terrify and disperse us, our jummahdar ordered us to charge the instant their pieces were fired, and before they could reload, or even draw their swords, we were on them. Nearly every one of them was cut down, and our victory was complete.

We learned from the prisoners that the village contained about one hundred and fifty men, who were entirely unprepared for a hostile attack. Naroba, in consequence of our success, was in high spirits, and gave orders to march directly upon the village: which we did at once, compelling the prisoners to guide us with their arms tied behind them. On our arrival before the gates, we summoned the garrison to surrender. A shower of arrows was the only answer we received: upon which, placing our ladders against the mud wall of the fort, we mounted to the attack. I led the storming party sword in hand. We found a number of Bheels had been mustered for the defence of the place, whom Gunput Rao had but lately taken into his service. These fellows galled us dreadfully with their ar-

rows; but as our plan was to close with them, we gave them few opportunities, after our once effecting a lodgment on the walls, of using their fatal weapons. The fort of the village was very small, and the garrison, taken by surprise, was cramped for room and in confusion. Part of them made a sortie, some for the purpose of fighting, and others of running away. Naroba at the head of his corps met them, and having borne down all opposition outside the walls, was coming up as I pursued the enemy out at the gate. The Bheels stood outside inactive, fearing to discharge their arrows, and wound their own men, intermingled with ours. I now attacked the Bheels, who with the party that had been so anxious to make a sally from the fort attempted to return and enter it again; but I placed my men

before the gates, ordering them to resist to the last any body of the enemy that should attempt to force an entrance. The enemy seeing this, with great alertness ran to the scaling-ladders, which still remained against the wall, and tried to force an entrance by their means. These intentions were quickly seen by Naroba, who sent round fifty men to keep a flanking fire along the wall as they descended inside, while another party performed the same manoeuvre on the outside: by this means they were tumbled headlong down in every direction. The Bheels, finding their own party worsted, sought for safety in flight to their native wilds. The other soldiers without the walls, seeing there was no hope of success, fled for their lives. Every thing being thus in our possession, and not an enemy left before us in less than an hour

after we began the attack, we proceeded to plunder: but we could discover only a few pots and pans. There was, it is true, a good supply of grain, of which we carried off all we could find the means of conveying away.

Whilst some of the men were hunting for plunder, they reported that they had found a prisoner in a subterraneous cell, and bound to the wall by a strong chain. Thinking the unfortunate being was some enemy of Gunput Rao, I obtained permission from Naroba to release him before we quitted the place to march back. I thought it possible he might perhaps give us some information of importance, and I went myself to his place of confinement, which was dark and damp. Not a sound save the clank of the unfortunate prisoner's chains could ever

be heard in it. A soldier was sent for a torch to shew us the way, and soon returning we reached the spot. On placing the torch so as to see his countenance, what was my surprise at observing my old and tried friend Nanna. “Nanna! my dear friend, is it you indeed, that I behold in this horrible dungeon—Speak! you cannot have forgotten me.” In a voice feeble and faint he replied, “What, Pandurang, is it you—a friend, and here?”—“It is in truth,” I answered; “thanks to the gods who conducted me hither.” I bade them break his chains, which was soon done, and Nanna and I were speedily in each other’s arms. “Am I in a dream?” said Nanna. “How came you here—can it be real?” I told him this was not a time or place for explanation, that I must lead him to my comrades, who

would rejoice with me in the preservation of a friend. Nanna was weak, and it was with difficulty we got him to walk up into the air, the sudden effect of which made him faint. A little of our attention speedily recovered him, and I related to Naroba the friendship that had existed between us. He congratulated me on the event, giving his hearty assent to Nanna's accompanying us to the cavern. I confess I longed to hear the particulars of his captivity. Curiosity was a leading characteristic in my disposition, and I thought he must also feel not a little curious to know how I came into my present situation.

The total destruction of the fort would have required more time than we could spare, or safely afford to remain, while our other detachments were in the field, and

their operations a matter of uncertainty to us. We contented ourselves with demolishing the gates, and as much of the walls as time allowed, and then returned to the cavern; having lost ten men, and others of our number being badly wounded. I myself received a sabre-cut, which, though not dangerous, gave me great pain. It was late before we reached the cavern; and upon making the well-known signal, we were admitted once more. We found, as I had apprehended, that during our absence a party of the enemy had attempted to carry the place, but had been repulsed by the guard, which but for me would not have been left to protect it. The detachment which had gone in search of the treasure had returned, not so successful as we hoped it would have been. Canooje stated that he

had lost twenty men, and that, although he had seized the money, to his great disappointment there was not half the sum he expected. He had learned from the prisoners, however, that the bulk had been conveyed away in a different direction; and that, his men not being in a condition to pursue it, they had returned with about seven thousand rupees in their possession. The money was well escorted, and it appeared that, if we had not cut up the intended reinforcements, Canooje would not have attained his purpose as easy as he did, perhaps not at all. The news of our victory was no small thing, however, in our favour, and tended much to lessen the consequence of Gunput Rao, and to damp the spirit of his followers. Our wounded having been attended, and every care in our power

shewn them, we stretched our fatigued limbs on our mats, and sought a refuge in sleep from our past labours. In the morning a council was held, to consider what steps had best be taken in pursuance of our objects. Canooje first proposed sending out spies to obtain intelligence of the movements of the enemy; but this was overruled until the receipt of another secret despatch from Sevaje. It seemed necessary, as we had lost so many men, to send out considerate agents to obtain recruits for our detachments. This was immediately done; and Canooje, after giving a full account of our recent proceedings, and the capture of the treasure, in a despatch to Sevaje, marched away from us with his well-appointed troop.

There being nothing of moment to occupy me, I hastened to Nanna, who was

already shewing he made progress in his recovery from the effects of his barbarous imprisonment and accompanying starvation. I related to him the particulars of my history since we quitted each other, and with which the reader must be already so well acquainted as to be able to recall them to recollection. Nanna in his turn informed me that, on arriving at Satarah, he lodged the woman who accompanied him in an obscure house, which was the same night surrounded by the agents of Gunput Rao, who forcibly carried her off; but the next morning she returned, saying, the people who took her away had released her. Nanna stated, that being intent upon finding out whether the boy to whom Sagoonah had been betrothed was living or dead, he lost no opportunity of inquiring into the matter;

but finding it in vain, he left Satarah for the purpose of joining me at Poona. In his way thither he was surrounded by ruffians, who bound him fast, and conducted him to the fort from whence we had rescued him. There Kokoo examined him, and desired him to tell where Sagoonah was concealed: he also made strict inquiries respecting myself. Nanna would answer none of his questions, but remained silent; upon which he was sentenced to imprisonment in the dungeon, and *natchne rotee* :* this was to endure until he should betray his friend. Having said he was determined not to do so, he was in addition chained to the wall where he was found.—I hereupon pressed this trusty friend to my heart, and related to him all I had formerly omitted in

* Bread made of the coarsest grain.

giving him a sketch of my history. I also let him know the probable situation I stood in with Sevaje, the lawful successor of the Satarah musnud. Nanna was struck with wonder on hearing this part of my history. After standing with his mouth wide open, he said, "I always thought you were a great scholar, but never dreamed of your being a prince at the same time—let me fall prostrate!"—"Not so fast, my dear friend," I cried; "it is not quite so certain I am a prince; and if I should be, it is more than probable I shall never be in a situation to receive the homages of my friends in the way you would deliver your's."—"You shall be, though," said Nanna; "and may I live to behold you on a throne, and to say another star is added to the Pleiades, and that Satarah shall henceforth be Ata-

rah!"* I could not help telling Nanna he had already made great progress in the language of a courtier; that he perhaps acquired it from his enemies while a prisoner, and they had been practising flattery, and the arts of rising at court, upon the strength of their expectations. "I shall need," said I, "a deal of polishing, my good friend, before I can be compared to the dullest star in the heavens; as you would agree with me in thinking were you acquainted with the whole of my history, which perhaps I shall one day unfold to you. Prejudiced as you are in my favour, you would shake your head upon me were I seated on a musnud, if you knew every thing." Nanna was going to reply by a second essay in courtiership; but it was so disagreeable a thing to my ear to be ad-

* Atarah, or eight stars.

dressed in this gross way, that I thought, if ever I reached such high honour, it would then be full time enough to suffer the infliction of its hollowness, as some balance for the glory of the situation. Besides, I really felt conscious of my demerits, and all the flattery in the world could not make me change my opinion of myself; for I knew what my own conduct had been in numerous instances. It is true I was brought up and educated by menials and base wretches of every description; I had been cast upon the stream of life to float along by myself, as necessity or fancy directed; I had been persecuted wrongfully, and obliged to resort to mean artifices oftentimes for existence itself. This had been the case in youth, when passion is warmest, and reason possesses but little influence. I knew that the

few good actions of my life were overborne by the many bad ones. Still I was comforted that I had bought experience, and been enabled to see the advantages of a steady, correct, and uniform line of conduct. Villainy, I was convinced, had but a short day, and upright intention would ultimately triumph in every circumstance of life. Mahrattas are for the most part bad men—cunning, insidious, and self-interested; but they were ever unfortunate enough to be badly governed. The bad examples of their kings and rulers were ever before them; and the corruption and vices of lesser persons in authority contaminated the people, who are always profligate or virtuous according to the way in which they are governed. I observed to Nanna, that I had a deep dread at the idea of being called upon to govern; and

the only chance I should have of success would be to follow the example of my father, who I hoped I should see for many years fulfilling his duties, and thus I might become his scholar. My friend Nanna upon this observed, that I talked like a book, and that what I said must be true. He would only ask me, ignorant as he was, to be allowed to bask in the sunshine of my favour. I could not help laughing, but told him he might rely upon it I should never forget him. I said he must not be too sanguine ; that I intended the same day to consult with Naroba upon this subject, and upon the propriety of my making a visit to Sevaje, as I felt unhappy at being kept so long in suspense. I desired Nanna not to let a word drop upon this busi-

ness in the cavern, as he respected my friendship, and, any where else, not to let a word respecting it escape him. He promised me all I required, stated his determination to be faithful to my cause, and left me.

There were many solid reasons why I did not wish to make public that it was probable I was so nearly related to Sevaje. One reason was, that it seemed to me possible Gunput Rao might be induced to consent to a public inquiry, or an arbitration of the question between my father and himself, and that the right of the lawful successor might be settled this way: for he would, perhaps, be induced to abide by such a decision, as long as he thought Sevaje alone was living; as, after his death, Mahadeo would infallibly succeed to the musnud.

On the other hand, were Gunput Rao to discover I was living, nothing would induce him to abide by any decree excluding him and his son. With these notions on my mind I went to Naroba, and earnestly requested I might be allowed to visit Sevaje, having matters of importance to communicate to him. Naroba replied, that he himself could have no objection, but that he considered it his duty to mention the request to Sevaje, in the first instance, and then he would immediately communicate his answer to me. I was of course obliged to consent to this step being first taken, and I patiently awaited an answer from Sevaje, which could not occupy a long period of time in communicating. Naroba and myself, in the interim, made the best use of our leisure. We had the sword-practice among our soldiers

every day, rendering them as expert as possible in the use of their arms. I afterwards found the benefit of these lessons, as will be seen in the sequel. I also exercised myself in every possible way; but, from the exertion, I found the wound in my arm inflame, and become exceedingly painful. At the time an answer arrived from Sevaje I was in very great pain; but the reply being such as was consonant with my wishes, I determined that even the serious appearance it had began to put on, should not deter me from my visit to him, whom I had so much reason to believe was my father. I stated my readiness to depart, and Naroba procured me a guide, desiring me to put on an appearance as unsoldierlike as possible. The first guide was to conduct me to a second person, through whose means I should gain

admittance to Sevaje, unsuspected by the enemy. I obeyed every suggestion made, and followed my guide with a palpitating heart to a small wood, at a considerable distance from our strong hold. My guide tapped at the door of a miserable hovel, which was opened by a lean, tall, emaciated old woman, who instantly admitted us upon seeing the person of him who conducted me. There was something in the appearance of the old hag which at first led me to suspect treachery, and my suspicions were not laid asleep on my seeing the guide and old woman, head to head, in a close whisper. I thought this was unnecessary, where all present were friends, and my bosom became filled with vague suspicions every thing was not right. The guide now went away without uttering one word to me, and the old

hag seated herself opposite to where I sat; but no effort of mine could induce her to enter into conversation. She mumbled unintelligibly to herself, until I began to get impatient, and begged her to lead the way whither I designed to go. She turned her head round and pointed to the sun with her shrivelled finger, and then to the western quarter of the heavens, from which I judged we must not set out for Satarah until after the sun had set. It wanted full three hours' space of it yet, and being fatigued, and my wound very painful to me, I spent my time in no very agreeable way; for not a single word could I get in the way of conversation from this mysterious old woman. I threw myself on a mat to try and sleep, but sleep fled far from me; and I could only indulge in dreams of what the

future might have in store for me, and fall back upon my own thoughts for a means of employing a short period that passed away slow as ages.

CHAP. X.

AT length the sun having gone down blood-red, and left that tranquil gloom which so quickly covers the earth on the departure of an Indian day, the old woman tapped me on the shoulder with a long stick. I arose and followed her. Age made it necessary for her to proceed slowly, and a complete ignorance of the point to which she was leading me impelled me to keep pace with her. My impatience could ill brook the tediousness of such a mode of travelling. A man just hoping to behold his parent, from whom he had been separated nearly the whole of his life, might be excused for an anxiety to press onward and realize his

anticipated hopes; I therefore offered to procure a litter for her, or even carry her on my back, so that we might not linger away all night in our march to the city. The woman made no reply to my offers, but merely shook her head, and I was compelled to proceed at a snail's pace coss after coss, so that it was past eleven o'clock ere we entered Satarah. My conductress took me through the principal streets, until we came to a shop where they sold sweetmeats, and there she purchased several bits of burnt sugar. We then visited a baker's, where she bought bread; and the fruit bazaar, where she obtained cocoa-nuts, betel-nuts, and pomegranates. In the last place she purchased a basket to hold what she had bought, and placed it upon my head; so that, in my present dress, I had exactly the

appearance of a cooly or porter, and was completely disguised. I followed her still in silence as before, and she led me, to my great surprise, towards the hill on which stands the seven-towered fort of Satarah. Observing my astonishment, she for the first time told me to address her as mother, but not utter a single syllable to any one I might see in her presence. The old creature clambered the hill with difficulty, and when we arrived at the gate of the fort, she knocked with her stick, and a sentry opening the wicket demanded who was there. She replied, "only old Bhowanee and her son."—"Ah! mother," said the sentry, "I thought you had forgotten us: how do you sell your sweatmeats? Come in."—So saying, we entered; the basket was taken from my head, the contents examined, and some

purchases made. We were then allowed to proceed to the house of the officer who had the charge of the arsenal, an octagon building in one of the seven towers. The old woman was admitted immediately, and a whispering dialogue began with the officer, which convinced me they were well acquainted. After some little further delay, I was beckoned into an inner room, and the officer resident in the house began to remove a large ammunition box which stood in the centre of the chamber. I was wondering what could be the meaning of this, and to what it all tended, eagerly looking out for the end of the mystery, and almost suspecting foul play; when I imagine the man touched some secret lock or bolt, for a door in one of the corners of the room flew open, and discovered a flight of stone stairs,

which my conductress descended, motioning me to remain where I then was. The resident in the house retired, and I was left in a most uncomfortable solitude, not wholly divested of fear, when I recollected many circumstances in my past life that, less suspicious in appearance, had led me into trouble. It was not without pleasure, therefore, that in a short time I heard the old woman returning, and greeted her haggard face at the top of the staircase. From thence she beckoned me to follow her, and I found myself quickly in a very comfortable square stone room. She then opened another door in the wall, through which she disappeared, and again left me in solitude. I now threw off my coat, and lay down upon a mat, the wound in my arm torturing me severely. I had not been reclining many minutes

before the door through which my conductress had passed opened, and she again entered, followed by a venerable old man, who bore a lamp in his hand, the dim radiance of which did not suffice to give me at first a correct view of his features. Before he noticed me he whispered something to the woman, who reascended the staircase, and closed the trap-door, as I judged from the sound.

I was now alone with him who was, most probably, my father. What my sensations were at that moment can I ever forget? Hope, fear, pleasure, pain, seemed to have possession of me at the same instant: filial awe, reverential regard, a respect for royalty, came upon me, and robbed me of all power of utterance! One minute would decide my fate, and cast the die of my life—

raise me to honour, or dash me into the lowest deep of misery ! The old man, turning towards me, now said, “ What, young and valiant man, wouldst thou with me ? I have heard of thy bravery in my cause, and I cannot fear treachery from a brave man ! I have, therefore, admitted thee to my seclusion. What wouldst thou, young man, with me ? ” As he spoke, the light flashed upon his features, and I recognized the old goatherd of the glen. “ I would claim acquaintance, my lord,” I observed ; “ we have met before.” — “ Ah ! where, where ? ” he hastily inquired, stooping at the same time to examine my features, as I was sitting cross-legged on the mat. “ Truly,” continued he, “ I have seen that face before — come to the light ; let me be certain.” So saying, he bade me arise, and I obeyed.

“Yes,” said he, “I have seen that face before.”—“I think in the Asseerghur glen,” I responded. “In the glen!” said he. “What! art thou the youth to whom I gave a ring?” I told him I was the same; and, mindful of my promise, had sought him in Indore in vain, and had now sought further, and found him in Satarah. “And dost thou then take so great an interest in my fate, as to follow me from place to place? This is kindness I have been of late little used to.—But your arm bleeds! I fear I am the cause of much bloodshed.—Say, where got you that frightful wound?” I observed, it was a mere scratch—the consequence of my own rashness. “Rather of your valour,” said he; “for I guess how it is; but it must be bound up, and thus the blood staunches.” So saying, he drew my

coat, which I had taken off, over my shoulders, and began to bind it round my wounded arm. This sudden and unexpected act made me bare my right arm, on which was fixed the silver kurdoorah. He started, and exclaimed, “What ! what do I see ? Nay, I am blind—my eyes are old, and fail me ! It cannot be !—let me look again. It is the same ! Where got you that chain ?—speak ! torture me not a moment longer !”—“It is my own,” I replied, “and I feel I am in the presence of him who first bound it round my loins.”—“My son, my son !” cried the old man, as I fell upon my knees and called him father ! A moment was passed in deep silence, which ended in a shower of tears, that, streaming down my father’s venerable beard, fell warm upon my head. I can make no attempt to de-

scribe my feelings at that moment, or to do justice to the scene. It was a feast of unspeakable joy to my heart—a moment worth years of adversity !

As soon as the old man was more composed, he requested to know by what accident I had learned that his recognition of the chain would warrant me in concluding I was his son. I related to him all that Shewdhut Wanee had informed me of. At the name of Wanee he wept aloud, and desired me to state the particulars of his disappearance, as he understood from Naroba I could give him every particular respecting it. I then entered into the melancholy detail once more. It was frequently interrupted in the recital by his tears and bitter invocations against the perpetrators of the deed. He then referred to the kur-

doorah, and exclaimed, “ Oh ! that was a night of horrors, when I put this chain around thy infant body—it was a bloody deed, my Jeoba !”—“ Is Jeoba, then, my name ?” I eagerly inquired. “ It is thy name, my son, and happy was the day to me that gave thee birth ; for, notwithstanding the machinations of my most deadly foes, Heaven has brought thee to my arms !”—“ May you be successful against your enemies !” I now observed, in order to lead away the conversation from myself. “ Your claims to the musnud of Satarah are just ; and you have stout hearts devoted to you, my father, among your troops.”—“ Ah, my son ! would this dispute might be settled amicably ! Would that Gunput Rao, your unnatural uncle, could be induced to acknowledge my claims, and forego further

bloodshed !”—“ As long as he believes I am not forthcoming,” I replied, “ he might shew a readiness so to do, and wave his claim until after your decease, when Mahadeo, his son, would succeed to the musnud.” —“ Then must our present relationship remain a secret,” said my father. “ I have applied to the English government to interfere and adjust our quarrel; or, if they refuse to do so, that they will allow their agent here to appoint an arbitration, and see that all is fairly and honourably conducted. Thus Gunput will not dare to commit any outrage, should the decision be given in my favour; although, by his intrigues, he will endeavour to effect all that bribery and influence can accomplish, to secure in his interest the persons to whom the settlement of the cause is entrusted.”

—“Justice, however, must prevail,” said I; “and when you are acknowledged the real successor, then will I openly, and not until then, address you as my father.”

Sevaje assenting, we turned to other matters; and he demanded how it was possible I had been preserved, amid the perils I must have undergone, and then miraculously appeared at so critical a time? I replied, that no one but he who sought for my destruction could account for my escape in infancy, and that in due time I would relate to him all my history, and the minute events of my chequered existence, which had so singularly brought me into the arms of a father and a king. I remarked, that of the particulars of his quarrels with his relentless brother, Gunput Rao, I had also acquired some knowledge. My father was

in amazement, and could scarcely credit this. I observed also, that I had it from the best authority—no less than that of Gunput Rao's own son, and my cousin Mahadeo, at a time when neither of us had a knowledge of our affinity. I now related to my father all I had heard from Mahadeo respecting the conduct of his brother, and he proceeded to inform me of the earlier part of my history. He told me, that after I was betrothed (here I interrupted him, to inquire to whom, and whether to a girl named Sagoonah?) to one who was now no more, or, if alive, fallen into the hands of Gunput Rao—I again proceeded, “Oh, say not so! she is safe! We love each other with a fervour equal to that of Leila and Mejnoun,* though little did we ima-

* The Romeo and Juliet of the East.

gine we had been betrothed in our infancy.” —“ This is indeed extraordinary,” observed my father. “ Where could you have met her? How could you have fallen in with her?” I said I would unfold all to him, when he had done relating his own history.

“ The will of great Dum be accomplished !” said my father, who then proceeded: “ After you had been betrothed to Sagoonah, the rage of Gunput Rao, your uncle, knew no limits, and put on such a deadly appearance, that I conceived it prudent to quit my place of residence, and retire with you (then an infant, and my only offspring) to a small estate which I possessed in the Chandore territory. Having some business to transact previously at Indore, I visited it for the purpose, and left

it one rainy evening. With the ready money I had about me, I purchased there for you the silver kurdoorah, which I thought remarkably elegant, and fastened it around your waist myself. Proud of the ornament, you frequently tottered beside me, until I feared you would be fatigued before you would let me take you up in my arms again. After sunset, about the space of an hour had elapsed, when we were surrounded by armed men, among whom I discovered your revengeful uncle. ‘Seize the miscreant!’ he cried; ‘bear away that child—obey your orders!’ At that moment you were forcibly taken from me, and your uncle’s dagger entered my body. The ruffians departed immediately when I fell, to satiate themselves (so I reflected, for I had full possession of my senses) with your in-

nocent blood. I shortly became insensible, and knew nothing more until I found myself stretched upon a comfortable bed, and watched with great solicitude. I shall pass over the many days that elapsed before I recovered, and merely inform you, that the kind man to whom I owe my life was Shewdhut Wanee, of Indore. He told me he had been to Ooguin, and on his return found me weltering in my blood. Discovering signs of life, he placed me in the hands of two coolies who were attending him, and despatched his servants in search of the assassins. It need scarcely be repeated, that all search after them proved ineffectual. You may now not be surprised at my sorrow on hearing of the fate of Shewdhut, and that for his interference in my concerns he lost his life. He knew my rank

and expectations; he was well-acquainted with my misfortunes, and promised to afford me all the help in his power, on his return from Marwar (for which he shortly set out), provided I had not succeeded before that time in obtaining justice on my enemies. As the rajah of Satarah was deposed, it did not then seem the most eligible time for asserting my claims; and, not wishing to criminate my brother, or try to gain redress against him and security for the future, while the issue of my application might be doubtful, I determined to live as a recluse, until affairs at Satarah became more favourable to my views. Should such a time arrive, I thought I might intimidate Gunput, by threatening to expose him and bring him to justice, if he threw any obstacles in my way. Alas! I little knew the

implacability of his disposition—the desperate daring of his character!

“After living some years in retirement, I visited Shewdhut, who told me he was going to Satarah on his mercantile affairs; and I requested him, at the same time, to try and gain intelligence of Gunput and his plans, and particularly to discover, if possible, whether you were alive and with him, and what were the reports that had been circulated respecting our disappearance. He promised to use his utmost exertions to discover what I required. On his return I once more emerged from the woods, and went to his house. He stated that his brother had placed himself upon a litter, and had been thus conveyed to Satarah, pretending he had been waylaid while in company with me: that our lives had been at-

tempted; that, in defending myself, I had held up my child, which was stabbed to the heart! In short, that he himself was left for dead, and plundered of every thing valuable about him! It appeared that he acted his part marvellously well: every one gave him credit for shedding tears of genuine sorrow; especially as he exhibited a letter, purporting to be written by his 'dear brother' at Indore, inviting him thither for the express purpose of settling all their disputes, and arranging for ever the causes of the unhappy differences that had subsisted between them, and stating his own claims to the throne to be false. This letter Shewdhut told me bore my signature; and so well was it imitated, that no one doubted its being a faithful document, and none, therefore, were likely to dispute the

tale my brother had imposed upon them. That he might the better deceive the people, he gave out that it was his determination to resign the world; and, with his son Mahadeo, he had left Satarah, and not been heard of there from that time.

“Such was the account which Shewdhut brought me, and which I must confess struck me with amazement. Why Gunput should resign the world, possessing the ambitious views he did, was a problem beyond my power to solve, even by conjecture. In all likelihood, finding he could not succeed whether I was living or dead (there being no hope of the rajah again sitting on the throne at that time), he made up his mind to quit Satarah, lest some unforeseen event should develop his ferocious attempt on my life and on that of my son.

Shewdhut could tell me no more of you than what I have stated already; namely, that, having used you as a shield to cover my own body, you had been stabbed, and thus perished. Nothing new occurred to me for some time. I selected the glen of Asseerghur for my place of retreat, known only to Shewdhut. One day a gossein begged admittance to my cottage; and, ever ready to shelter a weary traveller, I admitted him. He told me his name was Gabbage Gousla. His manners were singular, and, to me, unaccountably strange. He did not remain long; and I thought little about it, except that he disguised his features as much as possible, and spoke a very few words, and those apparently in a feigned voice. It was not until conversing with you on the same spot, and your in-

forming me Gunput Rao walked the earth in the disguise of a gossein, and with the name of Gabbage, that I knew it. The truth then flashed upon my mind; I felt certain that he must have recognized me, and this at once accounted for his constrained and odd manners."

After mentioning that nearly about the same time two females had taken shelter in his cottage, who, I informed him, were Sagoonah and her aunt, my father continued: "Feeling certain," said he, "that my cruel brother meditated a fresh attack upon my life, I left my place of refuge, and once more bent my steps to Indore: there my friend Shewdhut concealed me. The war was then raging; and I felt assured that, if the English were disposed to act with jus-

tice, they would not fail to reinstate the deposed rajah of Satarah. It turned out that they did so; and I therefore requested Shewdhut to gain for me some intelligence upon which I could rely, respecting the plans and objects of my wicked brother. He confirmed me in the surmises that I felt in consequence of your information in the glen. Shewdhut went further than I had commissioned him to do; for, learning from some disaffected jagheerdars at Satarah, that there was much doubt as to the truth of my being really dead; and they evincing great partiality towards me, and equal abhorrence at the idea of my brother becoming king, he told one of them, named Canooje, that I was then alive at Indore. Canooje, much pleased at this intelligence,

left Satarah with Shewdhut, and presented himself before me, urging me to come forward, and assert my right to the musnud; he assured me that there was a powerful party ready to support my cause. Thus encouraged, I consented to make the attempt; and, finding the present rajah was in a sickly state, and that no time must be lost, I promised to enter Satarah in secret; and when a sufficient number of men were raised and organized to support me, I agreed that I would openly declare myself.

“A curious circumstance occurred about this time, which tended strongly to confirm me in my new resolution. It was during Shewdhut's second absence at Satarah, that an old woman came to Shewdhut's house; she perceived that I avoided her, as I necessarily did all strangers. She called out

after me, saying, ‘Why fly you from your friends, my lord, the king?’—‘King?’ I ejaculated. ‘Aye, king!’ she replied; ‘for he who claims a throne shall not succeed, and he who has not claimed, may—I shall follow you.’ After she was gone away, I heard she was considered a witch at Indore, and that her name was Dhankin Bhowanee.”—Here I interrupted Sevaje, by saying, “Bhowanee! why that is the name of her who conducted me to these chambers!”—“The same,” said my father; “and a most useful channel of communication I have found her, between myself and the band in the cavern. I am at a complete loss to discover what her motives are for serving me so zealously; but there is no doubt we shall one day discover. Her appearance removes suspicion: no one suspects her of being a

messenger of mine, and her services have been most important." I then remarked upon the strangeness of the circumstance, and inquired how my father himself obtained admittance to the fort. He said, "By chance: a relation of my wife's was the officer in charge of the arsenal; and Bhowanee, assuming the character of a dealer in fruit and vegetables, introduced herself to him, and informed him of my existence; also requesting him to aid in secreting me for a short time. He readily gave his consent, and I followed the old woman in the character of a porter to this place. To deceive the sentinels, my friend here sent another man down the hill with the woman, dressed much as I was; and thus my presence is not suspected, and I am, perhaps, in a place of greater secu-

rity than elsewhere. By means of Bhowanee, I have been enabled to convey my wishes to Canooje, Naroba, and my other brave friends and officers. Your stay here now must be short; but we may soon hope to meet again under better auspices. Before you depart, however, you must inform me of every thing respecting Sagoonah; for she has an uncle, a rich banker here, who has engaged himself on the side of Gunput, and is determined to bestow her hand on his son Mahadeo.”—“ My dear father,” I answered, “ be assured she is in safety, and beyond the reach of both Gunput and her uncle ! She is now in Bombay, and I am anxious to send her intelligence respecting myself, for it is long since I have done so, and her bosom is torn by a thousand conflicting doubts and apprehen-

sions respecting my safety." My father then said he would procure me a trusty messenger, who would safely take what I had to communicate; but that, not being present nor within call, it would be better I should give him my message, and he would take care it was forwarded, instructing the hircarrah himself. I consequently gave my father the necessary information to convey. I was about to depart, when I heard that the old woman was gone, but had left word she would await my arrival at her lonely hut. Dressed as a servant of the keeper of the arsenal, with whom I set off, I accompanied him as far as the city, and then, bidding him adieu, hastened to Bhowanee's hut.

I now felt like a new man—my spirits were raised and my heart lightened by my interview; so that I was almost a different

being. I was no longer fatherless, but had become of importance in society ! I felt that happiness might yet be mine, and I bounded over the road with astonishing alacrity. Just as I reached the wood in which the hut of old Bhowanee stood, a *cassid* or letter-carrier passed me. Knowing he was the bearer of the English post, and on his way to Poona, I hailed him, and asked what the news was. “The rajah is dead !” he replied ; and continuing his pace too fast for me to keep up with him, I could learn nothing more. I now felt that this was to me a most awful crisis. Now must we either stand or fall for ever ! and the importance of this intelligence so occupied my thoughts, that I was close to the old woman’s hut, before I imagined I had gone half the distance. I found her within, and

communicated to her what I had heard from the cassid. She told me she had heard the evening before that the rajah was not expected to live many hours. I begged her to proceed, and shew me the way to the cavern. She said, in reply, that she must hasten away to Satarah, lest Sevaje should wish to communicate with Naroba on the affair, and that I must patiently await her return. This was a delay I little expected, but to which I was obliged to make up my mind. It was evening before she returned; and then she bade me follow her, and she would conduct me to the guide who would see me safe to the cavern. She led the way to a rude hovel; and, knocking at the door three times, a man appeared, to whom she gave her despatches, and, pointing to me, turned away towards her own habitation.

On my arrival at our place of security, I informed Naroba of the death of the rajah. He observed that the time was now come to bestir ourselves ; but first proceeded to read the despatches from Sevaje, which he found contained the same intelligence. Sevaje also acquainted him that he had prepared a document to be presented to the ministers and the British Resident, claiming his right of succession to the throne ; and adding, that he hoped Gunput Rao would be prevailed upon to submit the dispute to arbitration, and thus prevent tumult and bloodshed. He farther required us to remain in peace, and we should receive early intelligence from him of the result of the requisition which he had made. He further stated that, if his proposal were agreed to by the opposite party, he should nomi-

nate Naroba as one of the punchayet, to which his claims should be submitted. In order to induce Gunput Rao to come more readily into the measure, Sevaje had pledged his word to bury in oblivion the attempt that had been made by Gunput upon his own life, and the murder of his child. He concluded by saying, that he eagerly awaited the reply of Gunput; and that he had every hope the dispute would be terminated without further bloodshed. If it were not, he had left no means untried towards its being done peaceably; and he was clear of all the consequences that might arise out of a different line of conduct on the part of his brother. Upon receiving Gunput's answer, Sevaje promised to forward another despatch.

CHAP. XI.

I SHALL henceforth relate the progress of events as they unfolded themselves. The reader of these my memoirs will understand, that all which I detail as having taken place before I again meet my father I glean from the despatches which almost daily reached us from Satarah, or from the direct communications of those concerned, unless it may be any thing in which I was personally concerned. Gunput Rao took several days to consider the contents of my father's communication. With the conviction of my non-existence, he at last consented to an arbitration, relying on my father's promise of not divulging, either on the trial or after-

wards, the attempt made upon his life ; and further, that as my father's troops had deprived him of great part of the arrears of the estate, that he should not be called upon to refund any money that might appear to be against him and in my father's favour. This being agreed to on the part of Sevaje, the preliminary conditions were signed by both parties. Naroba was nominated on the side of my father ; and the rich banker, Sagoonah's uncle, on the part of Gunput Rao : the two others next named were my father's friend, who filled the office of dewan at Satarah ; and Lucknuchund Baboolchund, the farmer of Gunput's estate : the British resident presided as umpire. This last arrangement was vehemently opposed by Gunput ; but the resident declared no arbitration should take place unless he were pre-

sent as umpire, and Gunput was obliged to submit. Naroba now prepared to leave us to proceed to Satarah and sit in the court of punchayet, and I requested leave to accompany him part of the way thither, as I was now able to find my way back to the fort or cavern without a guide. Unwilling to make any display of pomp or parade, Naroba determined to proceed on foot. We set out accordingly one morning very early, and just as we were entering a deep valley, which led by the shortest cut into the main road, old Bhowanee appeared, spreading wide her shrivelled arms, and crying, "Stop, stop ! there is danger in the glen—advance, and you die !" I observed to Naroba, "Can this be possible? Can Gunput Rao act so treacherously as to murder one of my father's arbitrators in so public a manner?"

—“ I tell you true,” said the old woman ;
“ hasten round yonder hill : from thence
there is an open and safe path ; ’tis a long
way round, but delay not a moment.” We
thanked her, and offered her a present of
some gold ; but she turned away from it,
saying, “ Away !—avarice guides not my ac-
tions—away, away !”

“ This is a strange being,” I remarked to
Naroba, as soon as we were out of her hear-
ing ; “ what is the reason she takes such an
interest in Sevaje’s affairs ?” He said, in
reply, no one knew, but the time would
probably soon arrive when she might be
brought to explain her motives. He com-
mented severely on the treacherous act of
Gunput Rao to waylay him, and observed
that it must be noticed, for he had no claim
now to be treated with like an open and ho-

nourable disputant, but to be crushed and put to death for an assassin. I observed, that this was very true, but we could not prove any thing against him beyond the words of the old woman, and they would have but little weight in the court. Naroba seemed convinced I was right, and saying nothing in reply, moved forward in silence. On arriving at the hill on which Satarah stands, I bade him farewell, hoping he would let me hear from time to time how the business proceeded; which he promised to do, and we separated.

Our band in the cavern was now commanded by a sirdar named Jysing, a Rajpoot of great valour and personal strength. Nothing occurred for two days after my return from Naroba. At length a despatch came, announcing his safe arrival, and that

the arbitration had sat once upon the cause for which they were summoned, and that both disputants had entered into an engagement to abide by the judgment given. It appeared that Gunput had brought up the old story of the washerwoman again, and endeavoured to prove my father basely born; so that, from the nature of the investigation required, the business was likely to continue a long while in hand. At length the conclusion took place, and the award was made out; but the umpire, aware of the hostile forces of each party being in the vicinity, declared he would not announce it until the armed bands of both parties appeared before the palace-gates, and surrendered their arms. In the despatch which communicated this intelligence, Naroba mentioned his having written to me ex-

pressly some days before, and given me joy on the event of the trial. It was therefore clear that my father had made known to him the relation in which we stood to each other, conceiving, as the matter at issue was nearly concluded, there could be no danger in so doing. I was at a loss, however, to account for the non-receipt of such a letter. I feared, as it had miscarried, it had fallen into the hands of Gunput or his party. Still I apprehended no danger, even if this ferocious man should discover my near connexion with Sevaje, as the business was settled, and he had bound himself to abide by the decree of the arbitrators.

At last the day that was fixed for our marching upon Satarah, to deliver up our arms before the palace-gates, arrived. The award was still a secret to all but the ar-

bitrators; and they had been kept in the palace, lest through their means it should by any chance be made public. The anxiety manifested by the people was at its highest pitch of excitement, and crowds awaited the arrival of the hostile bands with great anxiety. Jysing, although about to surrender up his arms, determined to keep up the dignity of the soldier to the last moment, and ordered every man to be prepared as if going to battle on the morrow. In consequence of these orders, swords were sharpened, horses caparisoned, and armour examined and securely buckled on; so that we made, on the whole, a very imposing shew. Two hundred of the number were mounted, and the remainder acted as infantry. I was mounted on Naroba's Arab war-horse, and never felt so proud and elated in my life.

At length I thought my miseries were over : I was no longer to be a wanderer over the country—an outcast, without a place to repose in ; but I might look forward to quiet and enjoyment. We proceeded to the open road by the hill, where I had last parted from Naroba : the spot was about four miles from Satarah. When we had got round the hill to a place where we could command a view of the road, we saw the corps of Gunput Rao proceeding slowly towards Satarah. On seeing us approach, they halted, and held out a white flag as a token of amity, and we did the same. We naturally imagined from this, that they were anxious we should all arrive together, and at the same moment, under the gates of the palace ; and we accordingly approached them, greeting them as friends. When we

were nearly close to them, however, Jysing, whose eye was upon the slightest movement among them, espied the sword of their commanding-officer or chieftain half unsheathed as it were impatiently. Convinced there was treachery before him, he gave his men the word to halt, and draw their swords, but not to advance, acting solely on the defensive, and awaiting the intentions of the enemy. Nanna was close by my side, and said, “Pandoo, we shall have hot work—we shall be attacked!” The words were scarcely spoken before the conduct of Gunput became clear, by his cavalry forming, and charging us with great fury. Our men were dreadfully exasperated at such unheard-of treachery. They received the charge like well-trained soldiers, furious as it was; and our detachments were so nearly

equal, for Canooje's corps had not yet joined us, that we were horse to horse in the cavalry, and nearly man to man in the infantry. The latter having discharged a volley at each other, flung away their matchlocks, drew their swords, and fought hand to hand. At a distance, giving his orders, stood my treacherous uncle Gunput; while his son Mahadeo, and Kokoo his chief officer, led on his men. Nanna speedily got engaged with Mahadeo. Both were mounted, and fought with deadly anger. Nanna was an excellent swordsman, and Mahadeo had acquired no small dexterity among the Pindarees. While they were in the height of their combat, Kokoo observed me near, and singling me out, made a furious charge upon me. He sat his horse firmly, and approached, shaking his two-edged sword, and

gnashing his teeth with passion. When he came up to me, he cried, "I have found thee at last, thou would-be king!" His horse was tall, and my little Arab wheeling at the instant he came up to me, to avoid the shock which would have overturned us, he passed me with the impetus of his horse's motion; and before he could wheel round to face me again, I was close in his rear. This gave me a great advantage. I had now reason to rejoice at my good sword practice; for whatever skill I possessed, I knew I should have occasion for it with Kokoo, who was a skilful swordsman and a bold enemy, but rather too forward and choleric. He cut at me with such fury at first, I could do little more than parry his blows. Of the state of the combat around me, I knew nothing. Kokoo's violence,

however, got the better of his skill; he began to strike slower, and gave me the opportunity of cutting at him occasionally, though without effect. At length we ceased, as it were by a tacit and mutual consent; and while thus taking breath, I perceived a reinforcement of the enemy approaching. My heart sickened at the sight, and I made up my mind not to perish unrevenged; when I heard the cry of "Canooje!" from our own men. This revived me a little. "We shall still retrieve our fortune," thought I; and raising my sword, I became the aggressor in attacking my antagonist. Kokoo's eyes flashed fire: he defended himself dexterously, and soon converted my attack into a defence, by severing the reins in my left hand, so that my well-trained horse was no longer manageable. I saw my danger, in-

stantly dismounted with a spring towards the rear of Kokoo's animal, and thrust my sword into its flank at the same instant, and all as it were by one effort. Horse and rider both fell; but Kokoo was on his legs before I could touch him, and being both now upon an equality, we hacked away without mercy. I had the advantage in height, and my antagonist in strength. At last he wounded me in the left shoulder by a slanting blow, and at the same moment I succeeded in cutting the cloth that fastened on his turban, just grazing his chin. The turban soon fell off; while, enraged beyond measure, he dealt a blow at me which had settled for ever all our enmity, had not I luckily contrived, more by chance than design, to receive it on my shield, which it penetrated half through, though made of

rhinoceros' hide. My next cut, however, made at his bare head, before he could recover his guard, told home. My superior stature gave me more power in striking that part of the body than any other, and my sword entered his uncovered skull with such violence that it snapt in my hand ! From Kokoo I had no more to dread ; and taking up the weapon that dropped from his unnerved and yet quivering fingers, I was enabled to breathe a moment in comparative safety again.

Nanna, who had been as obstinately engaged as myself with my cousin Mahadeo, was the first object that caught my view. He was standing with his uplifted sword over Mahadeo, who lay stretched on the ground, mortally wounded. The combat still raged around me, save in the imme-

diatè spot where Nanna and Mahadeo had fought. Resting on my sword a moment, ere I went to the assistance of my friends on the other part of the ground, I saw old Bhowanee rush past me towards the spot where lay the fainting Mahadeo. She uttered something which I was too distant, and too much occupied to hear; but Nanna told me afterwards that she screamed out, “Thou art there—thou art dying! Thou knowest me (which it appeared Mahadeo did, by his horror at her presence). Did I not tell thee I should exult over thee one day? Did not I tell thy father the sod should be thy only crown—the grave thy palace—the dust thy bed of state? Govindah, my son, thou art avenged!” She was the same hag whom Mahadeo described he had encountered amid the terrors of the pit,

where he buried the carcoon. The dying man seemed as if he would have answered her, and muttered something which could not be understood; while having spoken the foregoing words, Bhowanee walked as quickly away as her aged and shrivelled limbs would allow.

But, to return to the battle, which still raged with great bitterness. Gunput Rao finding Kokoo had fallen, rushed among the combatants, and incited his party to fresh exertions. Age did not seem to slacken his courage, nor remorse to make terrible to him the prospect of danger. Just at this period, and before victory had declared itself for either party, a strong body of English cavalry came down upon us, and, commanding us to desist, made us all prisoners, with Gunput Rao at the head of his party,

who seemed mortified to the quick, and bit his lips with rage. Canooje was killed, and Jysing was badly wounded; I had received several slight scars, besides that which Kokoo inflicted upon me. Nanna escaped unhurt; but almost all our jummahdars were badly wounded, and we had seventy men killed. Our antagonists also suffered severely; Kokoo and Mahadeo, with four of their chieftains, were killed, and sixty men, besides twenty badly wounded. Thus terminated this bloody conflict, so wickedly planned by my cruel uncle, who had no doubt obtained a knowledge, by some secret means, of the result of the arbitration being in Sevaje's favour, and also of my being in existence. What his ultimate object was in thus attacking us I could not conjecture, unless he was actuated by revenge alone; for

if he had succeeded in annihilating our whole force, my father was still safe in Satarah. Gunput Rao would not, therefore, have been one step nearer a throne; for had Mahadeo survived, his father's conduct, after our destruction, would have operated to prevent his succession. The violation of his word to the English resident, and his attacking us so close to Satarah, would have been sufficient to effect this.

The officer in command of the English troops would not be supposed to know which party were the aggressors. We were all obliged to submit to be his prisoners, until he received orders from the resident how to dispose of us. Gunput Rao marched at the head of the whole party, guarded closely; behind him were Nanna and myself; and then came the other officers indiscriminately.

In this order we arrived at the city gates, and were just entering, when Bhowanee crossed our march, in front of Gunput Rao, and pointing at him, set up a hideous scream, between a laugh and a shriek, and mingled among the crowd. My uncle's countenance saw her not unmoved, but he uttered not a syllable. The multitude followed us to the durbar, and the whole city was in the utmost consternation.

It appeared subsequently that Gunput Rao's plans extended beyond the attack of our party. We learned that Sevaje, deeming it proper he should appear at the head of his friends, as Gunput Rao was to appear with his followers in person, had left Satarah, and was proceeding to meet us on our road, when he was surrounded by ten men of Gunput's corps, who were taking him off,

when the English came up with them, released him, and sent him back to Satarah with a guard. How the British troops came so opportunely to the spot where we were engaged, I did not at first discover. It appeared afterwards that the resident, in order to give all the effect possible to the development of the award to the parties and the people, and to confer all the dignity he could upon the proclamation of a successor to the musnud, had ordered the troops out accordingly, and they were under arms, waiting the arrival of the hostile parties. The delay in our appearance occasioned a strong suspicion that every thing was not correct, and that, on the part of Gunput Rao, there was some foul play. Apprehensions were also entertained for the safety of my father, who had been seen to set out

alone to join his soldiers. The resident was deliberating on what step he should take, when intelligence was brought to the durbar that Gunput Rao's troops had attacked those of Sevaje on their march. A strong detachment of cavalry was instantly sent off, with orders to protect Sevaje, who was on his way to meet his troops, unsuspecting of treachery. The English cavalry soon came up with Sevaje, who had been made prisoner by Gunput's party, freed him, and sent him back to the city, escorted, as before stated, by a guard. The remainder arrived in time to prevent further bloodshed, and to make all on both sides prisoners.

Upon our arrival at the mansion of the English resident, we were ordered to lay down our arms : and as soon as it was dis-

covered that we were not the aggressors, we were all released, both officers and men. Gunput Rao was kept a close prisoner, and his men were marched off to a distance in separate parties, so as to disperse them as far from each other as possible ; and then, after being warned not to be found again in arms, they were set at liberty. My father was sitting near the resident when I entered the hall ; and on seeing me, rushed into my arms, exclaiming, “ My son, my son ! ” The resident had heard of me before, and was consequently not unprepared for what he saw : he congratulated my father upon once more beholding me. Faint from fatigue and loss of blood, I was obliged to retire, and was conducted to my bed. The proclamation of the true successor to the

Satarah musnud was deferred until the following day, that I might not be excluded from a participation in the ceremony.

Gunput Rao, in the meanwhile, was outrageous at being deprived of his liberty. He demanded to be set free; but no attention being paid to his requests, he at last maintained a sullen silence. Unfortunately for him, another cause had arisen to add to the heavy vengeance that hung over his head. A conspiracy was detected at Poona, to excite a rebellion, and induce the inhabitants to throw off the British yoke. The conspirators also were discovered to be carrying on certain treasonable practices beyond that city. Several of the ringleaders, among whom were a Brahmin and a goldsmith, were blown from guns, by the orders of the British resident. Some of the conspirators

could not be found. One, however, was known to be Gunput Rao, the aspirant to the Satarah throne; and his friends at Poona only awaited the tidings of his success at Satarah, to carry into execution the most violent of their measures. Such was the state of affairs, when an express arrived from Poona, on the day my father was to be proclaimed, ordering the Satarah resident to arrest and detain Gunput Rao until proof could be produced against him. The resident, upon this, had my uncle brought before him, and openly charged him with malpractices at Poona. Gunput, seeing all was known and concealment useless, boldly acknowledged his share in the plot, and that he was one of the conspirators. He was remanded to prison, and his confession reported to the resident at Poona; while a separate

despatch announced the decision of the arbitrators respecting my father, and the outrages of Gunput, together with his attempt to murder us many years ago. The resident communicated this part of the despatch to my father, demanding if it were the truth. Sevaje replied, he would rather be silent upon his brother's crimes, and most particularly upon those he now alluded to; but he was compelled to acknowledge the report was but too true. The resident urging him still further, he related the whole affair.

The royal succession was announced with great pomp. I was just able to go through the ceremony, seated by my father's side, though the proclamation was not long in reading: it was read in the Mahratta and English languages; after which, discharges of cannon and volleys of musketry resounded on every

side. My father held a durbar the same day, and all the principal natives, with most of the English officers, attended it, and offered my father their congratulations upon this happy event, which had thus put a termination to his long sufferings, and placed him at last upon the musnud.

CHAP. XII.

ON the following day the English resident requested an audience of my father. He appeared before him with a melancholy countenance ; and, after the customary compliments had passed, informed him that the fate of Gunput Rao was decided, he having received instructions to cause him to be blown from a gun within twenty-four hours after the receipt of the order. My father shed tears at hearing the sentence which was to be executed upon his enemy. Still he felt that enemy was his brother, connected with him by the closest ties of consanguinity, which, though the other had outraged, it became him not to forget. He

could scarcely repress his grief within proper bounds, on perusing the order, and, with a fervency of manner that did honour to his heart, he implored a commutation of the sentence. I seconded the petition; for, independently of a wish that his life might be preserved on my father's account, I was very anxious to learn from my uncle a full and true account of his crimes. By this means the world must be convinced of the injuries we had individually received, and of our indisputable claims to the throne. I mentioned the different characters in which I had encountered Gunput Rao in the strange vicissitudes of my past life, and also that he had been the agent of the murder of the shastree, at the instigation of Trimbuckje Danglia—this being a point which I knew the British Government was most desirous of

casting some light upon. The resident conceived that a full and clear elucidation of this affair would be a plea that might possibly preserve my uncle's life; and in case Gunput would make a full confession, he promised to bring the consideration of the matter before the Poona resident, upon our petitions in the culprit's favour. There was also this advantage attending the preservation of the criminal's life; namely, that the English would thus become masters of the full extent of the treasonable conspiracy at Poona in all its ramifications, and be thereby the better enabled to crush any minor associations to which it might have given rise, and to which they had no cue that would open a discovery. In the mean time, sentence of death was pronounced upon Gunput. The effect it produced upon his mind

baffled all our previous calculations respecting him. We had expected an exhibition of that callous indifference to danger—that disregard to consequences and recklessness of the future which had always seemed to form a part of his character. The very reverse was the fact. Perhaps the constant state of excitement in which he had lived, and the high hopes cherished by ambition, had kept up his fierce spirit through his long career of guilt and wickedness. Baffled at last, and no longer stimulated by the prospect of success, his spirit had given way—he was unable to rally, and sank into despondency. However this might have been, upon his being brought up before the resident, he seemed overcome with the horror of his situation. Pale and trembling, a cold perspiration crept over his frame; his knees

tottered—his lips shook—and the agitation he evinced on hearing his sentence, shewed that he was no longer an object of fear. He with difficulty kept himself from falling to the earth; and, when ordered back to his cell, he was obliged to be supported. My father was not present; but I attended the scene, and shall never forget it. The mind that outrages every human obligation—that has smiled at murder, and followed the dreams of a flagitious ambition; the hand that has been dipped in blood, and the heart fertile in the conception of crime, has in this life but one step to sink—but one moral degradation more; and that is, that it should meet the evil it has often inflicted upon others like a coward, when it falls upon itself. Seeing me, the offender meanly supplicated my interference to preserve his

wretched life, and I more than ever despised him for it; yet I was not unmoved, particularly on account of my father. I turned away my head, and made the miserable wretch no reply. On retiring, I reflected upon my present situation, compared with that of my uncle. The vindictive, relentless Gabbage Gousla was changed indeed—he, who had so long, so mercilessly persecuted me, now sued to me for his life! Alas! what mercy did he ever extend to a victim? Nevertheless, I determined to do all I could to preserve him. I went to my father, whom I found closetted with the resident, prior to sending off the despatches for Poona, in which our prayers and requests were to be transmitted. As soon as my father saw me, he said, “He will be spared, my son; I feel that he will be saved, if his

proud spirit will allow him to make a full confession of all his enormities."

The event shewed that my father was correct in his opinion. The English Government took up the subject in the view I had formed, willing to oblige a brother, and to develop secrets which Gunput only could unfold concerning their own affairs. The sentence of death was commuted into imprisonment for life, provided a true and ample confession was forthcoming on the part of the culprit, to commence from the day he quitted Satarah for the purpose of destroying my father and myself, to that of his imprisonment. My father thanked and embraced the British resident for his kind intercession, and said, with tears in his eyes, that, had his unhappy brother met the fate to which he had been sentenced, his own

remaining years would have been passed in unremitting sorrow. The resident now put an end to the subject, by saying that he felt confident this act of mercy, conceded to his wishes on his ascending the throne, would be an earnest of his future clemency to his subjects, and that he hoped his highness's reign would be a long and prosperous one.

The confession of Gunput Rao was to take place in public, in the event of his accepting the conditions proposed to him. The resident sent for him under a strong guard, and the hardened sinner approached with the full idea of meeting his sentence. The gun which was to blow him to pieces, and scatter his mangled remains over the earth, was loaded before his eyes. The match was lighted; and slowly, and with trembling knees, he drew near the fatal instrument.

His countenance was haggard, his eyes deeply sunk—fear made rigid every feature, and his pale and dry lip told that the fever of his soul had dried up all the moisture from his tongue. On being brought before the resident, and informed of the conditions of his pardon, he seemed overcome by the unexpected event; and, at length, clasping his hands in agony, he exclaimed, “Spare my life, and I will confess every act and deed in which I have participated!” Methought at that moment he appeared more hideous than I had ever before beheld him. He was informed that, though his life was spared, he would be imprisoned in the fort of Ahmednugur for the remainder of his days. He bowed very low, even to the earth, and was then taken back to recover himself, having been informed of the day he was to make

his confession, and unfold the dreadful catalogue of his enormities.

By this time I was become very impatient to hear about Sagoonah, and to clasp to my heart one who had shared with me in many of the vicissitudes of my adverse days. I despatched a suitable escort to Parwell to meet her; having first sent a messenger to Bombay to apprise her of the joyful news of my unexpected elevation, and to express my anxiety that she should participate with me in the prosperity that attended my steps. She arrived at the time I expected her. Our meeting was too full for description; it was steeped in a joy that can be felt but not described: it was a sort of ecstasy, which is too like delirium for sober language to paint. Sagoonah was struck with no less wonder than pleasure, to find that I

was the youth to whom she had been betrothed, and that her spouse was a prince. Women love show and splendour; and she was almost bewildered with delight. She put a thousand and a thousand questions to me; her eyes, brilliant and deathly dark, sparkled, to think she might be ere long a queen! Never before in Hindustan did man and wife meet as we met. Now were all our troubles and escapes rewarded, and become but subjects to jest upon, or beguile an idle hour in relating! In the meanwhile, our fondness increased every hour; and I should occupy time and space to little purpose, were I to attempt a relation of all we said and promised each other. My father was highly gratified by the beauty of Sagoonah, and not less by her modest good sense. He gave his blessing,

over and over repeated; and an early day was appointed for our nuptials, provided the Brahmins gave their consent, as they are so tenacious of their rights of nominating the time of all weddings.

While my father and I were awaiting the hour to proceed to the durbar, and hear the confession of my uncle, I could not help asking him how the arbitrators on the other side came to decide so suddenly in our favour. He informed me, that, finding Sagoonah's uncle to be one of them, and that he adhered to Gunput Rao solely in the hope of marrying his niece to Mahadeo, it was quietly hinted to him that I was yet alive, and the betrothed spouse of Sagoonah. The banker finding this to be really the case, like a genuine trader thought it more to his advantage to affect

a shew of his sense of justice, and serve his views and credit with the public at the same time. He did not, indeed, care which married his niece, provided a prince was secured ; and he, therefore, veered round to the party likely to be strongest. Thus the other arbitrator of Gunput was left in a minority at once. The solitary arbitrator, not wishing to stand alone, or side with a falling cause, signed his name to the award, without remark or observation.

Sagoonah was introduced to her rich uncle, who made her a number of complimentary speeches on her approaching nuptials. I left her at his house, the durbar being assembled to hear Gunput Rao relate his confession ; and I promised Sagoonah to give her every particular as soon as it was concluded. The resident, many officers,

men of rank, sirdars, jagheerdars, Brahmins, and pundits, were present, assembled around my father. The latter entered, and I followed—both of us dressed in a rich suit of kinkob, with a string of pearls, and a diamond sprig in our turbans. We were preceded by chobdars and mace-bearers, who vociferated our praises in the usual strain on entering the court; and my father took his seat on a velvet cushion, embroidered with gold: I sat at my father's right-hand, and the resident on his left. When every one was seated, the culprit was sent for. In a few minutes the door of a side-passage unfolded. There was a stillness in the durbar, as if the world were dead: every eye was fixed on the culprit, who seemed confused at first by the number of the auditory, but soon recovered a little, and took the place

assigned him, with a guard on each hand. His lip was wan, and his cheek withered by anxiety, age, and apprehension. He began the following confession with a tremulous voice, but strong accent; at times hurriedly, and then with great deliberation, as if he were fearful of his recollection failing him:—

“ In what I am going to say, my interest cannot lie on the side of truth or falsehood; for enough is already known of my actions to prevent my concealing any part of the scenes in which I have been an actor, from motives of shame: the worst, perhaps, is already known. I shall state the simple truth: the fear of the world’s anathema cannot affect me in a dungeon; and the good appearance I once endeavoured to keep up, and the holy character I attempted to sus-

tain, I even then used as subterfuges or cloaks for my deep-laid designs: I had flung every thing on the hazard of a die, and fortune has betrayed me. I now, therefore, may well submit to my destiny; and, where a knowledge of my life and actions may be useful to others, unhesitatingly reveal the secrets of my past years; not that the advantage of others concerns me, but that, by so doing, I purchase life, which, in its very dregs, is dear to me, and the only thing that I can say I feel an attachment for in the world, now my dreams of ambition are ended. Vain dreams, that dazzled to destroy! If I have appeared overcome, subdued, humbled, it is because I feel I am worse than nothing; that even hope has forsaken me; that the preservation of my life is all I have now to obtain; and that it only

remains for me to spend my future hours in solitude and chains. Still, time may reconcile me to these. But, to die!—no; I could not die!

“ They told me, that in my infancy I was considered of a wayward and obstinate disposition; yet I shewed an aspiring temper. It may or may not have been so; education and intercourse with the world change our natural dispositions. It suffices, that, on my arrival at man’s estate, my ambition and haughty conduct involved me in many disputes. One of these I will relate:—My estate lay close to that of my brother Sevaje; and, being always anxious to increase my own property by any means, I claimed a piece of land belonging to my brother as my own. Sevaje refused to give it up to me: the cause was tried by a punchayet;

and, by address and bribery, I got a decree in my favour, and secured the land. It was not long after this that my wife brought me a son, whom I named Mahadeo; but she died in childbed. I was exceedingly grieved at her loss, and had scarcely recovered a little from the affliction into which it had plunged me, when I found that my son was carried off from his nurse, and could not be found. He was, however, soon after brought to me, having been picked up floating down a neighbouring river in a basket: the person who found him was a young man, named Govindah. Judging of my brother's disposition by my own, I readily imagined that this was his act, committed in revenge for the loss of his property: I therefore meditated a deadly retaliation, and consulted a friend how I should proceed to

effect it. This friend it was who first conceived the idea of throwing a stigma on my brother's birth, and thus enabling me to lay claim to the right of the eldest son ; by which means, should the deposed rajah be reinstated, I might, on his death, succeed to the musnud. Hence sprung all my crimes. This little seed of ambition, sown in a soil so congenial to its growth, rapidly sprung up like a rank weed, and I fed upon it to intoxication. Years passed away ; and, notwithstanding unceasing attempts to fix a blot on my brother's birth in such a way that it should be fatal to his rights, I could not succeed : he was still considered the eldest son, and every where respected and beloved. It happened that my brother had a son as well as myself, though considerably younger than mine, named Jeoba.

The child was seldom seen by any one; and, deadly enemies as my brother and myself were, it was not likely he would ever come into my sight, unless by some extraordinary accident. My friend and adviser, whom I have before mentioned, informed me one day, that my brother had sought the hand of a girl named Sagoonah for his son Jeoba. This information greatly enraged me; for, though the father of Sagoonah was poor, he ranked high in his caste, being no less than a Nagga Brahmin, and much respected by the people. Before my brother's proposals were accepted, I presented myself to the father of Sagoonah, and made an offer in behalf of my son Mahadeo. The father immediately mentioned to me the proposals made by my elder brother; and said that, at present,

he could give neither of us an answer, as he must have time to consider well so important an affair. This reply did not entirely deprive me of all hope; and I remained quiet, determined that the father of the girl should not have any rational grounds for objecting to my alliance. I was, however, disappointed; the girl was betrothed to my nephew, instead of my son. This stung me deeply—my pride was wounded, and I vowed deep unrelenting vengeance on both father and son. I swore I would crush them—sweep them from the earth—annihilate them! Sevaje, knowing well my disposition, determined to quit his estate, and retire to Chandore, having occasion to visit Indore first, upon business. I obtained intelligence of his design; I knew he must pass through a jungle; and there,

with two hired ruffians, I waylaid him and his child. The latter I wrested from him, and gave to my followers, desiring them to carry my orders into effect at a little distance; and, as soon as they had turned their backs, I stabbed my brother, who instantly fell. I was going to repeat my blow as he lay on the ground, to make assurance doubly sure; but, hearing a noise, as of persons approaching, I ran away, I knew not whither. In my path I saw something white, which I found to be the boy, whom my followers, probably also in alarm, had flung down, but had not destroyed, as I intended they should have done. I snatched up the child, intending to have murdered it in a deep ravine that lay at no great distance, when I heard voices and footsteps very near. I felt certain that my brother's

body had been seen, and I was pursued. I ran, to get clear of my pursuers, without knowing whither, and found myself, at last, close to some bullocks, apparently harnessed for marching, though not a single attendant was in sight. My pursuers gained upon me; and to be caught with the child in my arms, would be to make detection certain, while it also impeded my flight. I had scarcely time to throw the boy among the bullocks, which were standing together in a knot, there being no hedge, ditch, or copse near, where I could leave him, and recover him, so as to make sure of his death. The pursuit still continued, until I entered a village, where there was a well, a little out of the road. Some bushes hid me from sight a moment, and I went down the steps, and stood upon the lowest.

My pursuers passed by into the village, and thus missed me.

“I remained in the well the best part of the night. All was quiet; and as I knew, if I delayed until the dawn, I should be found by the people who would come for water, and thus the villagers suspect me, I mounted the steps before day, and, once more in the fields, retraced my road, thinking I might recover my nephew; but I either mistook the path, or, if I did not, I could discover no bullocks, nor even marks of their feet, the way I travelled. I was thus foiled in respect to the child, whom I long considered dead, or brought up in some lowly cabin, and ignorant of his parentage; and that, therefore, I should hear nothing more of him. My surprise was great, a few days ago, to find, by means

of an intercepted letter, that he was in existence, and well acquainted with his parentage. I was still more struck, when I recollected how frequently I had fallen in with him, whilst wandering about as a gosseïn, in years past, and how I have persecuted and lain in wait for him. My reasons for having done this will be seen in the sequel of my confession : at present I will continue my history, from the time of my brother's attempted murder, and the loss of his son.

“I now began to fear that inquiry would be made into the sudden disappearance of my brother and his child. I knew I should be immediately suspected as an accessory to it; and therefore caused myself to be carried into Satarah in a litter, having previously cut myself in several places, and

having my garments stained with blood. I gave out that my brother and myself had been attacked by ruffians; that I had fortunately escaped; but that I feared my brother and his son had fallen by their hands. I had taken the precaution to forge a letter as from my brother, inviting me to join him at Indore; so that I fancied no suspicion attached itself to me. The father of Sagoonah, however, was by no means satisfied with my statement of this affair, and openly declared he would investigate the matter most strictly. I was in a great fury at this conduct upon his part; and I determined, as I had gone so far in the case of my brother, I would not hesitate to take my revenge upon him. My guilt in this case was never even suspected, so adroitly was the affair managed—I removed him out of

the way by poison. His wife became a suttee, and I saw her ascend the funeral-pile of her husband; I saw the fire envelope her; and I heard her shriek of death pierce through the red fierce flames with inward delight, when I reflected that no one thing now stood in my way to thwart my projects!"—[Here the auditory of Gunput uttered a groan of horror, but no one spoke. He paused a moment, and resumed his narrative.]

"The orphan, Sagoonah, was left unprotected; but some charitable persons conveyed her to her aunt, at Poona. She had an uncle; but as he resided in Marwar, and had never seen her, and she, perhaps, had never heard his name, the roof of her aunt was her only secure refuge. This aunt was a very poor widow; and, by a

singular coincidence of circumstances, I was very nigh staining my hands with the blood of her niece, though, at the time, little suspecting who my victim was. By an event no less strange, the girl was rescued and protected by the very man to whom she was betrothed—by Jeoba, my nephew, whom I had often met under the name of Pandurang Hàrì. But to return to the regular chain of my history: after the funeral of Sagoonah's father and his wife, I saw no chance of our family succeeding to the musnud of Satarah; and I repented deeply the supposed murder of my brother—for that he was murdered I had not the smallest doubt. Being looked upon with an evil eye by many persons in society, I pretended to bewail my brother's loss, and gave out my intention of becoming

a sunyasse, and retiring from the world. I very soon afterwards carried my intention into effect, having farmed out my estate; which, however, the government sequestered, as soon as my absence and the course of life I had adopted were known. This act reduced me to real poverty; and I was also under the necessity of becoming a gossein. I caused my son Mahadeo to enter into the same mode of life, and we were regularly consecrated by a religious recluse, and duly commenced our wandering state of mendicity. Meeting with a set of gosseins, we joined them; and, conducting us to a cavern, they produced their ganga and opium, and began to smoke. The pipe was offered to me, and I inhaled the somniferous vapour until my head became affected, and I fell down insensible. On awak-

ing, I found my son had departed; nor could I obtain any tidings of him for many years, though I wandered every where in search of him. The prayers of the Peeshwa for a son being heard, he gave a grand feast to all the gosseins, from every part of India, who would come. I readily attended, and there first saw his confidant, Trim-buckje Danglia. He was then in the zenith of favour, and homage was paid to him by all present; but whether there was more reverence in my manner of saluting him, or he discovered in my eyes a beam of wickedness that corresponded with his own, and a talent that might be useful to him, I cannot tell: it suffices, that, after the feast was over, he sent for me. I waited upon him, and he demanded my name. I told him it was Gabbage Gossein: this was

the name by which I went, after taking up a religious habit; but I was commonly styled Gabbage Gousla, from my supposed habits of avarice. Trim buckje told me he was in want of a *gùrù*, a religious instructor, to his household, and made me the offer of the situation; which I gladly accepted, and took up my residence in Poona.

“ I soon discovered that Trim buckje was very careless on the score of his religious duties; like many statesmen who keep up an hypocritical shew of regard for their established creeds, but in reality are of no religion at all. It was an excellent plea, however, for my being closeted with him frequently, and thus I became a ready sharer with him in all his schemes of villany. There being a great meeting of our tribe at Indore, I procured leave of absence, and

proceeded thither. On returning I entered the hut of a recluse whom I met at Indore, and who promised to join me the following day. In his hovel I smoked ganga, and fell into a deep sleep, from which I was awakened by feeling water flung in my face. When I came to myself, I found that a traveller had discovered the hut to be on fire, had removed me from danger, and extinguished the flames. This traveller appeared to me a young man without money or employment, and apparently of such a pliable disposition, that I conceived, with a little tutoring, he might become very useful to me at Poona. I persuaded him to turn gossein on the spot, and to follow me. His name was Pandurang Hàrì. In stripping him to besmear him with dirt and ashes, I discovered he had a long bag of rupees tied

round his waist. I made no observation to him on the discovery, but secretly determined the money should be mine by some means or other. We sallied forth on the road to Poona, not now thinking it worth my while to await longer the owner of the hut, who had delayed beyond the time fixed for his return. On the road, I instructed my pupil in the art of raising money by begging. One method of extortion is, by letting the blood flow from some part of the body, or by threatening to use a dagger; the person so threatened, knowing that ill fortune is the consequence if he causes the blood of a gossein to flow, is instantly alarmed and pays his mite. Thus we impose on the public credulity, and thus the greater part of the religious mendicants gain their profits. Not in the present in-

stance desirous to wound myself, I proposed to my pupil that he should undertake the ceremony, whilst I collected the money. Pandurang Gossein was not the soft fellow I expected to find him; for, on desiring him to cut, he drew the knife across my arm instead of his own. I raised a mob directly, and accused him of an attempt to murder me for my share of the money which he carried: his rupees were thereupon taken from him, and he was ordered to quit Poona. Having secured his cash, I had made the best bargain, and felt glad the fellow was gone, as he was much too sharp for an instrument such as I then wished.

“ I now joined Trimbuckje again, and remained in his service some time; when a difference occurring between us, I quitted him and went to Bombay, where I gave out

I was deeply skilled in magic. I had not resided long in that city when my services were required to conjure to death an Englishman in office there. The person who brought me the written proposals was a peon in the police office, who, to my great wonder and amazement, I discovered was my old acquaintance Pandurang Hàrì. I owed him a grudge, and when the affair was discovered, which from the incautious conduct of the parties it was very soon, I did not hesitate to implicate him in the plot, and he was imprisoned in consequence. I was put into a room out of the common gaol, from which I contrived to escape in the night by bribing a police peon, who had charge of the chowkee.

“ I felt that Bombay was no place for me to remain in one hour longer, and I got

clear off to Poona again ; there interest induced me to seek a reconciliation with Trimbuckje. He became friendly again, and placed me once more upon his establishment. Nothing of moment occurred, until one day when the Peeshwa went to the Motee-baugh, when it appeared that he saw a pretty girl at a window. He became desirous of obtaining her for his harem, and Trimbuckje was despatched for the purpose of making her an offer to that effect, on the part of the Peeshwa. On getting a view of her features, Trimbuckje became enamoured as well as his master, and neglected his employer's interest for his own, proposing to take her under his protection. The girl refused indignantly, and threatened to make the Peeshwa acquainted with the way in which she had

been treated. Had she done this, Trim-buckje must have been ruined ; I was therefore employed to silence the girl effectually, and I engaged three gosseins of infamous character to assist me. We enticed her to a lonely house in the suburbs, where we prepared to stab her ; but none had the heart to do it, and my companions seemed anxious to save her. Upon this I rushed into the apartment where we had secured the unfortunate girl, and grasped her throat with a violence I considered sufficient to occasion her death by suffocation. I then opened the window and we threw her out, purposing to go round and convey the body to the river, and there fling it in. Before we could get to the back of the house where the window looked, we were necessitated to make a circuit of some distance ;

and on our arrival under the window, what was our surprise to discover the body gone ! We were now all of us terribly alarmed. We lit torches, and proceeded to hunt about, even to the bank of the river. We had distinctly heard a splash, and concluded that the girl, having recovered enough to get upon her legs, and run she knew not whither from her fright, had made off unconsciously in the direction of the water and fallen in, or plunged in upon seeing us in pursuit. Still we were in doubt whether she was dead or not. Upon returning to Trimbuckje, I told him his orders had been executed, and he liberally rewarded me, and hoped he should hear no more of the murder. On the following day, to my great dismay, the aunt of the supposed murdered girl, by some unaccountable mode, obtained

admission to the palace, and to the Peeshwa's presence, to whom she related the circumstances of the death of her niece as far as she knew. The Peeshwa, finding the murdered girl to be no other than she whom he was desirous of placing in his harem, was enraged beyond measure, and pledged himself to discover the murderer of the old woman's niece. Trimbuckje was in great alarm, and I was in no less fright, and we were considering how we could best ward off the blow that seemed impending over us, when a stranger desired to be admitted to him. I was not then present, but what passed I knew from Trimbuckje. The stranger offered to criminate Habeshee Kotwall, a decided enemy of Trimbuckje's. He appeared to know every particular of the murder, and it must have been he, who-

ever he was, that carried off the body from beneath the window. I did not understand that he stated the girl had escaped death, by which I concluded she was really no more. I never saw the stranger until the day when, in the character of a magician, he entered the palace to accuse the Hableshee to the Peeshwa. I then determined to get a glance at his face, and going round by a private passage which led to the Peeshwa's closet, where the magician was seated, what was my surprise to discover, under all his disguises of paint and dress, my old acquaintance Pandurang Hàrì ! I was so struck I could scarcely tear myself away, and I was, I believe, nearly discovered by the Peeshwa. Pandurang in this affair acted entirely on our side, and in our favour ; it was not therefore my interest to thwart

him. I awaited the result of his plans, which ended in the conviction and death of the Habeshee. Well, I thought to myself, this is a very clever fellow : how much was I mistaken in thinking otherwise of him ! There remained some mystery about the affair to be fathomed still, and I determined to watch the steps of Pandurang very closely. Observing Pandurang frequently gain access to Trimbuckje, I caused a man named Suntoo to watch his steps, and report to me his place of abode, the houses he visited, and the individuals who resided with him. He obeyed my orders with great exactness, and one day informed me that he had watched Pandurang into the house of a poor cultivator at a small village near Poona, and also that two strange women were living in the same house. I instantly

bade him conduct me to the place, and watching my opportunity, I appeared one day in presence of the women during the absence of Pandurang. Not having seen the features of the girl on the night of the intended murder, I could not be positive she was the person who escaped from me; but having seen the aunt crying before the palace gates, I instantly recognized her. Appearing before them as a mendicant, I dared not ask any questions; but being presented with a handful of rice, I departed. On my return to Poona, I made the most minute inquiries respecting the females who lately resided near the Motee-baugh, and to my astonishment learned that the girl had come from Satarah, and that the aunt was a poor widow woman who had resided for a long time in Poona. Could this girl

be Sagoonah? If it were her, I rejoiced in her miraculous escape, for I had deeds of horror enough on my conscience, without adding the weight of the child's murder to that of the father!

“Anxious to know how affairs went on at Satarah, I left Poona, and journeyed until I came to a large tank, in which I bathed and refreshed myself. The shades of evening now gathered fast around me, and, fully aware that I could not reach Satarah that night, I began to look around for some place of shelter. I found a lonely cottage with a light in the window, and being attired in the habit of a gossein, I did not hesitate to request a lodging for the night. An old woman opened the door, and what was my surprise on recognizing in her person the mother of a boy who

saved my son from a watery grave. I addressed her, saying, I had seen her face before. ‘Indeed!’ she demanded—where? ‘Near Satarah,’ I replied. She looked, but did not recollect my features. I inquired after her son Govindah: she answered in a mournful voice, ‘He is dead!’—‘And so young!’ I observed; ‘surely disease could not so roughly handle him?’—‘A villain handled him!’ she replied. ‘What, murdered!’ I exclaimed, ‘who could have had an enmity towards him?’ She answered, ‘the wretch whose life he saved from the waters—he killed his preserver.’—‘Speak! who mean you?’ I asked.—‘Your son Mahadeo—your son,’ said she, looking me full in the face; ‘and art thou, indeed, Gunput Rao?—thou hast a son as great a fiend as thyself!’—‘Dost thou know where my son

is ?' I eagerly questioned her—' canst thou tell me where he is to be found ; years have past since I beheld his face ?'—' Question me not further about your miserable child : he lives, no doubt—where, or how, I neither know nor care,' she answered. I again urged her to explain to me where I should find my son, and expressed my belief he could not have committed such a deed. She told me to speak no more to her on the subject, for her brain maddened at the recollection of it ; and she bade me quit the place before sunrise. Finding it impossible to learn any thing more from her respecting him, I retired to my apartment, and in the morning pursued my journey to Satarah. The distance being short, I arrived about noon. While in the city I found that Sagoonah's uncle had returned from Marwar ; but that

he intended to go thither again in about a year's time with an immense capital. I contrived to get introduced to his notice, and found him a man of haughty and aspiring ideas; but before I mentioned to him my knowledge of his niece, I made more inquiries in the town concerning her; and the result was a firm conviction on my part, that the girl I had seen at the cultivator's cottage, under the protection of Pandurang Hàrì, was the very same to whom my nephew had been betrothed. The report that the rajah would be reinstated on the musnud happened about this time, and kindled in my ambitious mind the desire of securing myself the succession, though how to effect this object did not then appear by any means clear to me.

“My visits to Sagoonah's uncle at length

became very frequent, and I at last ventured to mention to him his niece, advising him to take her home and aggrandize himself and her by marriage. He assured me he was perfectly willing so to do, if he could find her out; but all attempts for that purpose had hitherto proved abortive. ‘Could I but find her,’ he said, ‘some rich jagheerdar would doubtless seek her hand in marriage, on account of my wealth, and the purity of her caste.’ I told him he might soar higher than a jagheerdar, for a prince might be proud of such a wife. ‘Princes,’ he observed, ‘are not so plentiful, and it seems the relatives of the present rajah are all dead.’ I told him not all, for the nearest of them stood before him. He inquired if I was Sevaje. I told him no—he was no more; but that I was his brother, Gunput Rao,

and claimed the right of succession to the throne. The banker then asked if my son lived also. I told him he did, and, with his consent, should have his niece in marriage. He was much surprised at what I related, but told me I talked as if his niece were close at hand, demanding if I knew any thing of her. I told him I did, and that I wished I had as accurate information respecting my son; but I pledged myself to find him out and deliver his niece to him, provided he pledged himself to compel her to marry my son, and aid us with his wealth in attempting the sovereignty. The banker, who looked no higher than a landholder for his niece, instantly agreed to my proposal, and promised his niece and his coffers should be at my command. He bade me first haste and secure his niece, giving me

full authority to do so, and to bring her to Satarah. After some other topics were touched upon, I took my leave and hastened to Poona, imagining I could pounce upon Sagoonah without much trouble. But in this I was mistaken; for Pandurang Hàrì, having obtained a situation under Trim-buckje Danglia in Kandeish, had left the cultivator's cottage, and proceeded to his station. I despatched a shrewd gossein after them; but, although he actually had them at one time in his power, he let them slip through his fingers, having been wounded by a bullock-driver, with whom he found it necessary to form an acquaintance. I employed divers stratagems to make Sagoonah quit her home in Kandeish; but, being now on her guard, she never ventured out.

“ Trimbuckje requiring my presence

about this time, I could not proceed to Kandeish, but was obliged to depend upon my hirelings. The business upon which I went related to the murder of a shastree, who was on his way from Guzerat to the court at Poona. The particulars of this murder I can state when required: I shall only now say that he was murdered; Trim-buckje was suspected, and his person demanded by the British Government. In this predicament he consulted me, and I advised a quiet submission to his fate; and that, as his life was not to be forfeited, there was every hope he might escape from his prison again. I recommended him to select the most cunning of his followers, amongst whom was Pandurang Hàrì, whose name I mentioned, being anxious for his removal from Kandeish, to enable me to

succeed in my plans relative to Sagoonah. Trim buckje also appeared anxious that Pandurang should accompany him ; and his anxiety was so evident, that I could not help mentioning it to several of his most confidential attendants. I learned, to my mortification, that Suntoo, whom I had first set as a spy at the cultivator's cottage, had recognized the parties, and made Trim buckje acquainted with the existence of Sagoonah : hence his anxiety to deprive her of the protection of Pandurang Hàrì. I now saw plainly I should have to contend with Trim buckje Danglia, and oppose my cunning to his force. During my last interview with him, before his apprehension, he was pettish and quarrelsome, and I was haughty and insolent, which I then felt I might be, he being a fallen star. He

resented my conduct, bade me depart, and never appear before him again; and I withdrew in a rage. Pandurang Hàrì arrived and set off with Trimbuckje to Thannah; and, as soon as they were gone, I proceeded to Kandeish, where I found Trimbuckje's power had outdone my craftiness. Sagoonah and her aunt had been forcibly seized, and conveyed to Asseerghur, the killehdar of which place was a sworn friend of Trimbuckje's.

“Nothing daunted in my determination, I returned to Poona, and once more journeyed to Satarah, to report to the banker my failure. I said, ‘Neither your niece nor my son are yet found: I hope, nevertheless, to recover the former very soon, and then deliver her into your hands.’ The banker expressed his regret at the cir-

cumstance, saying, he left it all to me, as he was about taking a second journey to Marwar; and, on his return, he should hope to find both the young man and woman awaiting his arrival at Satarah. Pleased at finding the banker still confided in me, I promised to spare no pains to do as he desired during his absence, particularly as his niece was running up and down the country under the protection of a vagabond.

“ I found it impracticable to get the women out of the fort, and therefore awaited very impatiently the deliverance of Trim-buckje out of the hands of the English, and his re-appearance in the Deccan; for I never doubted but he would contrive, in some way or another, to effect his escape. In this idea I found I was ultimately correct. Trim-buckje, requiring the help of a friend,

sent a messenger to me, desiring I would procure horses to be ready near the Thannah river. Not understanding the message delivered by the men sent, I journied to Thannah as a gossein, where I soon found out the intentions of the captive. I determined to aid him, that I might once more get admitted to his household, by which means alone I should be able to fathom his intentions towards the women at Asseerghur. I was the more ready to aid in his escape, from finding that he only was to escape, and that his followers would remain prisoners: so that Pandurang Hàrì could not interfere with my future views respecting the females. Trim buckje escaped, and fled to Kandeish. The Peeshwa corresponded with him; but Trim buckje's day of glory was over, and I found it a useless

loss of time to dangle after him, and mingle in his train ; yet, hardly knowing what step to take, I staid with him until the sudden arrival of Pandurang Hàrì and one of his servants, who had been left behind at Thannah. The name of the servant was Nanna. He informed us of their having been seized by a horde of Pindarees, and of the events which occurred in a ruined fortress. The fellow related the story of a Musselman, named Fuzl Khan, which amused Trim buckje highly. Finding this, he related the history of another of the band, who was a Hindoo, and, to my astonishment, proved to be my own son, Mahadeo ; of whom Nanna could give me no account, after his escape from the Pindarees himself. Pandurang Hàrì was coldly received by Trim buckje, who viewed him as

a rival with Sagoonah, and wished him at the bottom of the sea. Not getting any reward for planning Trim buckje's escape, as was promised him, he quitted us; and, I have reason to believe, went to Kandeish, where he had left Sagoonah and her aunt. Trim buckje said, when he quitted, 'he will find what he deserves at the village.' I therefore felt convinced orders had been sent there to put him out of the way, if he appeared again. I felt great pleasure at this, because, in that case, an obstacle in my way would thus be removed.

"I was so fully assured of the necessity of getting rid of this Pandurang Hàrì, that I determined to have him assassinated myself, should Trim buckje fail to do it. I was meditating how I should best carry my intentions into effect, when Nanna, boiling

with rage, informed me that Trim buckje, instead of rewarding him, as he promised, for aiding in his escape, had repaid his services by intriguing with his wife; and that he determined to be revenged upon him at any risk. Anxious to secure such a tool to aid me in my purposes, and to follow up my plans respecting Pandurang Hàrì, I affected to enter into his feelings, and so blew up yet higher the feeling of revenge that still lurked in his bosom, until he swore to murder Trim buckje, by stabbing him when alone. I did not imagine he would succeed; but, whether he succeeded or not, the attempt would answer every end I had in view. He failed, and came to me for protection. I offered to save him, if he would swear to serve me. He dared not refuse my terms; but consented, at my instigation,

to murder Pandurang Hàrì. For this end I concealed him for the time, and then sent Nanna, for the purpose of hunting him down, to Trimbuckje's village, in Kandeish, whither I knew he had proceeded. At the village I informed Nanna he would see two active agents of mine—men of singular courage, and with hands that had much blood on them;—one, a robber by profession; the other, named Kokoo, not at all his inferior, having a head to contrive, and a hand to execute any mischief. To these men I had entrusted the rescue of Sagoonah and her aunt from the power of Trimbuckje, and felt almost certain of success, anxiously awaiting intelligence from them. Trimbuckje Danglia's importance being gone, his friends and train fell off from him, one by one, and, by-and-bye, he absconded no

one knew whither. Not hearing from Kokoo or Nanna, I determined upon proceeding towards the fort of Asseerghur myself; in passing which, I found the women were no longer there, having made their escape. In going through a deep glen, where there was but one small hut, being thirsty, I demanded admittance. The door was opened by an old man, in whom I recognized my brother Sevaje, whom I believed dead long ago. I mentioned my name, received what I requested to drink, and departed. At times I had wished the blood of a brother lay not upon my head: now, when I saw him alive, a formidable obstacle to my views, I wished him out of the way most heartily; and, hastening to Kokoo and his companions, I unfolded all my plans to them, and made them swear to

murder the inhabitant of the glen as soon as possible. I thus buoyed myself up with the hope of learning that Pandurang had been despatched, the women secured, and my brother, the goatherd of the glen, as he was styled, really destroyed. On my arrival at Asseerghur, Nanna crossed my path, and we agreed to meet under the fort. Instead of hearing from him that my plans had succeeded, I was mortified at discovering that Pandurang Hàrì had not been found, that the women had escaped, and that Kokoo and his companions had been shut up in a cell, and left to starve to death. My anger knew no bounds, and it was some time before I could understand that Kokoo was living, but that his companion was a corpse. I immediately set out with Nanna to the place where this affair took place, because

Kokoo was waiting my arrival there. On entering a dark cavern, Nanna led me to a small chamber, where he told me the body of Kokoo's companion lay, and that we should find him in another corner of the cavern. I entered, and, to my amazement, found two dead bodies instead of one. It struck me Nanna was deceiving me, and I looked upon him as a traitor. Instead of finding Kokoo, we discovered a sick man, a stranger. Upon this my rage rose to madness; and, drawing my dagger, I struck Nanna with it in the side, and left him for dead. I now retraced my steps to Asseerghur by the road that led through the glen; and, on looking into the hut of Sevaje, I found Kokoo there, the door open, and my brother, the goatherd, fled. Kokoo was overcome with weakness after his incarce-

ration, and was resting against the wall. It appeared that, owing to Kokoo's want of caution, they had enlisted Pandurang Hàrì himself to assist them; who, having heard all their designs, had fastened them into the cell at the cavern, and left them to perish.

“Kokoo was in a desperate rage to be so duped, and he swore vengeance, while I encouraged his relentless humour. We proceeded back towards Asseerghur, where I intended to give Kokoo necessary rest. On our way we met with a gossein whom I had despatched to trace out Sagoonah: he gave me information of her having been seen by a bullock-driver whom he knew, and that they were gone towards Guzerat. The bullock-driver stated that he might have brought them to Asseerghur, but for his

employer ; who, when he stopped them, released them, and suffered them to go their own way. This was two months prior to that day. Kokoo soon after volunteered his services to proceed after them to Guzerat with the gossein, who hoped to overtake the bullock-driver in his return to Nasik. The latter was able to identify the persons of the women. I then bent my own steps towards Poona. The war was at its height ; and, as the English had possession of Poona, the probability of the Satarah rajah being reinstated became greater, and my hopes of success proportionably strengthened. On my arrival at Poona, I connected myself with several dissatisfied persons, and soon found myself involved in treasonable conspiracies. My amazement may be conceived, when the conspirators introduced me, at one

of our meetings, to a young man, who, they informed me, was the successor to the Satarah throne, and one of the most active among them. This young man proved to be my unhappy long-lost son, Mahadeo, who was equally surprised at meeting his father again. When the conspirators were made acquainted with our affinity, they became more sanguine than ever; for, on my succeeding to the throne through the aid of the English, my first act was to have been to their injury, by an attempt to retake Poona. The particulars of this conspiracy are here." [Gunput now handed them in writing to the resident.] "While we were arranging the proceedings in this conspiracy, Kokoo returned from Guzerat, informing me that he had been disappointed at Broach, by the seizure of two strange

persons, instead of Pandurang and Sagoonah. He had left spies over them, being obliged to remove from the neighbourhood himself, from motives of personal safety. These spies followed a man and woman to Satarah, and we secured them; but found we had obtained a strange female, of whom we knew nothing, and a man, whom I ordered to be imprisoned, until we could get from him some account of the motions of Pandurang Hàrì and Sagoonah.

“I had heard my brother Sevaje was in Satarah, but where concealed I could never discover. It was reported he had assembled near six hundred men, determined to fight for the crown on the death of the rajah. I called a council, and it was resolved that we should also increase our numbers; for the pay of whom I proposed

that I should, by some sacrifices, obtain the arrears of my estate-rents and of my brother's, from the time of their sequestration. We discovered that my brother received his money from Shewdhut Wanee, of Indore; and that the best method to cut off these resources, was to despatch Wanee out of the way. This Kokoo did with his own hand. My brother's partisans, however, attacked my treasure, and deprived me of a great portion of it. I thus began to despair of weakening his forces, and, at length, acceded to his proposal of the trial by punchayet of our respective rights; not for an instant supposing he was aware of his son's existence. Finding matters, in this respect, the reverse of what I expected, I repented the giving my assent to this mode of settling our claims; and despatched a party to cut

off Naroba, on his way to the arbitration. By some means my plan miscarried. Naroba was a shrewd and keen fellow, and I dreaded his influence and penetration. I had considered Sagoonah's uncle my staunch friend; but, to my surprise, he, all at once, became cool, and seemed to have no longer any zeal in my behalf. The decree, too, I found, before it was promulgated, was not in my favour. My troops also had captured despatches from Naroba to the commander in Sevaje's strong hold, and with them a letter to Pandurang Hàrì. What was my astonishment at discovering, from its contents, and the congratulations mingled up in it, that he was the Prince Jeoba, the son of Sevaje, and the successor to the musnud! 'Now,' thought I, 'the sovereignty is gone from me for ever! but if I cannot

mount the throne, neither Sevaje nor his son shall. I will strike a blow to effect this, if we all perish together !'

" I summoned Kokoo, and we arranged, that when our respective corps met to enter the city, we should charge Sevaje's troops. Understanding my brother would proceed to join his men in person, we waylaid him, and got him into our power: how he was rescued I need not tell. From the conflict I alone survive; my son, Kokoo, all my principal confidants, have fallen ! I now stand alone. My dream of ill-starred ambition has vanished ! That which cost me so much toil, anxiety, and crime, is as if it had never been ! No longer excited by criminal hope, or supported by the perpetual attraction to the great object of my wishes, my spirit has fallen back upon itself: it is indifferent to

any state of things with life, and henceforth it must be occupied by corroding reflections, and that bitter anguish of the soul which scorches, but consumes not—which tortures, but will not destroy! I bow, therefore, to that fate, which it cannot be said I have left one effort untried to thwart; and when I enter the dungeon where the remnant of my wretched hours is to be passed, I shall reflect that I am but another victim added to those who have been sacrificed in the pursuit of the objects of a criminal and too-daring ambition?”

Such was the miserable history of my uncle's guilty career. The whole of it was reduced to writing; and the part which he gave in added to it, containing the details of the murder of the shastree, and the conspiracy at Poona. When the durbar broke

up, I hastened to Sagoonah, to lay before her the particulars of my uncle's confession. I took the same opportunity of relating my own adventures, previous to the time when I rescued her from the hands of the assassins. My father, who was present, severely chid me for many of my actions, and read me a lecture on the crimes of my juvenile days. Except pleading the mode of my bringing up, and the people with whom I associated—the rabble of the camp, and the society of those who, like myself, were dependant upon chance for existence—I could offer no defence, and bowed to his censures. On his retiring, I remained alone with Sagoonah, both of us anticipating the pleasures of the future, and our union in those bonds which death, in Hindustan, can scarcely be said to break asunder.

In a few days my father determined upon going in state to the Temple of the Preserver, to make pùja, and I prepared to accompany him. Crowds of his subjects were assembled to behold their new sovereign, and among those present I observed Fuzl Khan. How he found his way to Satarah I could not imagine; but, on my return to the palace, I sent for Nanna, and got him to make some inquiries respecting Fuzl. Nanna told me that he had been some days in Satarah, and having heard that Pandurang Hàrì was a prince, determined upon getting a sight of him, hoping he should not be entirely forgotten. I sent for him, and the fellow came, making as many salaams to the very ground as he made to Nagoo in the fortress of Asseerghur, before he sent us out to plunder his

wife. “How,” said I, “came you in Satarah?”—“Since your highness saw me at Broach, with irons on my legs,” he replied, “much has happened to me. The dullness of a convict’s life was, by no means, suitable to my disposition, a high-spirited Musselman as I had always been. Your highness will not, therefore, censure me for having dashed out the teeth of my guard, with the irons placed on me for securing my presence, and then taking to my heels. I wandered about the country for some time, till I found myself at Jumbooseer, where a number of boats lay at anchor. I hired myself to the tindal of one of them; and, in the character and capacity of a sailor, I arrived at Bombay. There I left my master, and wandered about the Deccan, until chance led me to Ah-

mednugur, where I was imprisoned upon a false charge. In the same gaol with myself were several Bheels, who were imprisoned for life. These men got hold of the muskets of the sepoy, and some cartridge-boxes of the sebundees, a militia corps; and by these means expelled their guards, and took possession of the gaol, amusing themselves with firing the muskets into the air. The magistrate of the place, however, becoming alarmed, surrounded the prison with troops; so that escape was impossible. No greater mischief had been done by this frolic of the prisoners, than the waste of a few rounds of musketry; which shewed, if bloodshed had been intended, the unhappy prisoners would have known better than to destroy their means of defence for amusement. The officers on the outside called to

them to open the doors ; but the prisoners, enjoying their fun, paid no attention to the mandate. Horrible to relate ! the doors were then blown open with a six-pounder, and a whole corps marched into the gaol ; which corps was commanded to put the unresisting prisoners to death ! I could not conceive such a dreadful example would have been made by those who pride themselves upon their humanity, as the Toope-Wallas are accustomed to do. The poor, naked, defenceless men crouched up in one corner of the gaol, having thrown away the muskets with which they had been frolicking ; and, never making a shew of resistance, were fired upon, from the distance of a few yards only, as they were begging for mercy. I was, fortunately, perched upon a wall, and escaped the effects of this merciless

and barbarous act. Twenty were shot dead, and twice as many wounded. The English Government, it was thought, could never sanction this inhuman act; but it appears that those in authority were very well pleased with the civil officer's conduct. It is strange that the Toope-Wallas boast of their desire to do justice, but never take notice of complaints against their agents in cases similar to the present. The officer makes his own report of his own conduct; and this they take, in all cases, to be true, and boldly uphold it in the teeth of fact; because, if he had not been a true worthy man, they would not have employed him! Moreover, the prisoners in this case were but black rascals, and the gaol wanted thinning; so that the prisoners commenced their frolic at the most convenient time.

As for myself, I descended from the wall, and was thrust into a cell, and deemed a lucky fellow to have escaped. A cart came the next day, and took away the bodies of the slaughtered men, as well those who had, as those who had not to do with the tumult, and carried them to the place of interment, in which it was desirable to bury the recollection of these murders at the same time. My term of imprisonment having expired, I was set at liberty, and found my way to Satarah, to throw myself at your highness's feet." Fuzl Khan having thus concluded his history, I observed to him that it was impossible I could employ one on whom no dependance could be placed; but I advised him to enter as a soldier; and, if his conduct were correct, I would take care he should not want promotion and encourage-

ment, for I should keep him carefully under my eye. He bowed, and went away, looking sullen and disappointed.

I afterwards inquired into Fuzl Khan's extraordinary history of the massacre of the prisoners, and I found it was too correct. How the magistrate would have been enabled to justify himself to the government, had he been accused, I cannot tell. The latter would have relied upon his official statement, perhaps, and the matter would have been just as it was. I mentioned it to one Englishman, who shewed great reluctance to enter into any conversation upon the subject, or even to hear it mentioned; and many of his countrymen seemed equally indisposed to make it a subject of conversation. Hence I conjectured that this wicked deed was not thought much

higher of among the Toope-Wallas than by ourselves ; and that it was not likely to add much to the reputation of their countrymen in the East or West. Perhaps the silence of so many upon this subject, should the foregoing surmise not be correct, may be attributed to the known modesty of our conquerors, who never indulge themselves in any thing like a boasting, even of their most valiant acts ! It would also, no doubt, be presumptuous to suppose that any thing but dire necessity, and a wholesome regard for the security of the city and gaol (so deeply involved as they must have been !) could have led a magistrate to a measure of such unparalleled and monstrous severity.

The next step which I took relative to myself was the holding a consultation of Brahmins respecting my marriage, which,

they were of opinion, should be celebrated as early as possible, with the same forms adopted on our betrothment. On the day nominated I proceeded to the residence of Sagoonah's uncle, with whom she was residing; and, having been welcomed in due custom as a guest, he presented me with the hand of my beloved, which I took with rapture. The priests then bound our hands together with grass, after the usual way, and I threw the cloth over my bride, which was, in the present case, of unusual richness; the corner of it was fastened to my garments, and I made the oblations to fire, while my bride dropped the rice into the flame, as her offering. The bride having stepped upon the sacred stone, we both walked round the fire (I cannot help relating every particular of a ceremony, though so well known, be-

cause it was one so important to myself); and, before the ceremony was completed and irrevocable, the Brahmins made Sagoonah go through the tedious seven steps, the Brahmins using a text of the holy writings to each: the first step for food, the second for health, the third for religion, the fourth for happiness, the fifth for cattle, the sixth for wealth, and the seventh and last, for priests to perform sacrifices. I then approached my bride on the completion of her task, saying, "May none interrupt us!" Next, I was obliged to address the spectators, and say, "This woman is auspicious! approach, and view her; and, wishing her well, depart to your homes." The spectators being gone, I remained, as usual, three days in the banker's house; and, on the fourth, conducted my bride, in great pomp,

to my own residence, where my father awaited her arrival, and received her with great solemnity, ending all with oblations to fire.

What more can I have to record—the perilous and varied years of my life being past, and having arrived at a tranquil and secure haven? I have performed my promise, as recorded in the first chapter of this my history. My readers now know my real birth and parentage, and the difficulties and troubles I had to encounter, from my youth up to the present happy period. Should the reverses which it is often the destiny of man to encounter reduce me from the elevation of the musnud to private life again; or should my future years be filled with eventful circumstances of a public or private nature; I may, once more, intrude myself

upon the world. For the present, then, my labours are over; I cease to write, and seek, in repose, to scrutinize my errors, and enjoy that peace which, at one period of my life, I thought fate had never destined to be mine.

I composed these memoirs of myself, to leave behind me, for the benefit of my children, a testimony of their father's vicissitudes in life. Now, while I am writing, I have one child, a son, whom, in compliment to my early protector, Sawunt Rao, I have named Pandurang Hàrì.—Courteous reader, farewell!

THE END.

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